WHAT IF ENGLAND FULLS OUT? ANDREW BOYD

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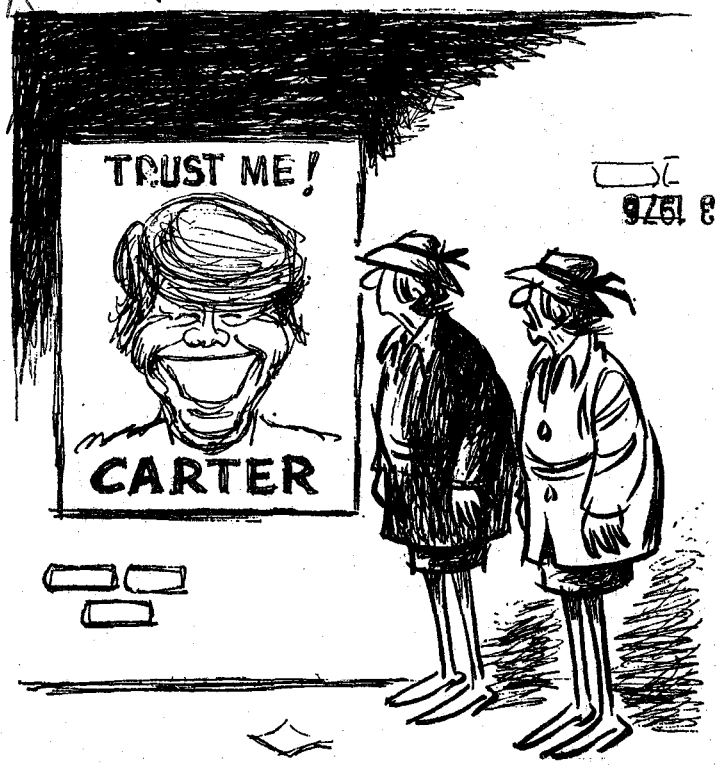

"Never eat in a café called Mom's, and never vote for a politician who says, 'Trust Me.'"
Interlandi, Los Angeles Times

Religion or Justice?
THE POLITICS OF LOVE Charles P. Henderson Jr.

Apathy, Pollution and Crime
America's Long Urban Turmoil
CHARLES H. TROUT

Robert Lekachman's
ECONOMISTS AT BAY
Victor Lebow

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THE THIN EDGE OF RETIREMENT
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LETTERS

uranium Down Under

West Newton, Mass.

I write to correct a recent report in *The Nation*, related to a January meeting held in Princeton on nuclear power [issue of March 13, box, page 302] which stated that "Dr. Helen Caldicott, an Australian pediatrician. . .told how the campaign she led to alert the people of her country to the dangers of radiation brought, with an assist from Australia's aroused labor unions, a complete reversal of the government's policy on mining and exporting uranium."

On September 18, 1975, the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU) passed a resolution stating that the executive of the ACTU insists:

> (*1*) That Australia immediately halt all uranium mining operations, except as is necessary for medical purposes and then only under strict controls.
>
> (*2*) That existing Australian uranium stockpiles be used or exported only for biomedical research and, indirectly through the production of isotopes, for medical diagnosis and treatment.
>
> (*3*) That uranium exports be refused to those countries engaged in researching or manufacturing nuclear weapons or generating power by fission or breeder reactors; and
>
> (*4*) That those existing contracts for the supply of uranium not in accord with these principles be abrogated.

The *policy* of the Australian Labour Government was to export uranium, and the policy of the Liberal Government remains the same. However, since all the unions of Australia are represented in the ACTU, and since they put the above statement into effect by refusing to mine uranium, the Australian Government has been powerless to carry out its policy. As yet there has been no confrontation between the government and the ACTU on this issue, and until one occurs the uranium will stay in the ground.

Helen Caldicott, M.D.

more than mischief

New York City

Re your editorial, "Night Work" [Feb. 14]: Why do you, and others, persist in referring to CIA clandestine agents as "professional mischief makers"? This "sweet," "lovable," "benign" description of operatives whose function is death and destruction in other countries defuses your positive purpose of exposing these "night workers" for what they are. *Leonard Zimmerman*

the Fred Hampton case

Ann Arbor, Mich.

Following up your editorial ["Corrupt, Stupid and Indecent," Apr. 10], on FBI crimes, I write to call attention to another significant trial, currently underway in a Chicago federal court. This suit was brought as a result of a predawn raid on December 4, 1969, by Chicago police upon the apartment of Fred Hampton, chairman of the Illinois Black Panther Party. The raid resulted in the deaths of Hampton and Mark Clark and the wounding of four others in the apartment. A federal grand jury subsequently found that of the eighty-three shots fired that morning, one was possibly fired by those in the apartment.

The suit was filed after no indictments were brought at the federal level and no justice was available at the state level of the "criminal justice system." Survivors of the raid joined the families of Hampton and Clark in a civil rights suit seeking $47 million in damages. Discovery in this suit has uncovered a "federal connection" of FBI surveillance, interference and harassment of the Black Panthers. Incredibly, the government turned over 130 volumes of surveillance materials *after* the trial had begun. This has created an enormous burden on the plaintiffs' attorneys. . . .

Funds are badly needed to place the new evidence before the jury in Chicago. Donations can be sent to the December 4th Committee, 53 W. Jackson Blvd., Room 1362, Chicago, Ill. 60604.

Rick McHugh

EDITORIALS

The Carter Problem

Assuming, for the sake of analysis, that there exists somewhere a guiding intelligence in the Democratic Party, it must now be straining to figure out that party's best course toward nominating a candidate who will unite the factions and lead to victory in the November election. Georgia's Jimmy Carter has simplified that task considerably with his impressive win in Pennsylvania. He did it, as usual, as an outsider. The bosses and labor (meaning its out-of-step leadership) were behind Jackson. The liberal establishment, so to speak, was backing Udall. Humphrey was looking over everyone's shoulder, hoping for any result but the actual one.

For those on the left of the party, the prospect is discouraging. Udall jogs along from primary to primary, never winning one. On the issues, he is by far the best candidate, but it is now clear that his electoral appeal does not reach very far beyond the prosperous suburbs. There is some small comfort for such Democrats in the virtual elimination of Jackson, whose attempt to reassemble a "lunch bucket" neo-New Deal constituency has been a resounding failure. There seems no way for Humphrey to get into the act at this late stage unless he chooses once more to play the destructive role of spoiler. Which brings us right back to the Carter question, or problem.

There can no longer be any doubt that Carter charms a very broad constituency. He has demonstrated that appeal now in state after state and in all sections of the population. And there is every reason to think that, in the twenty-plus primaries still ahead, he will steadily increase his strength as a candidate. No Democrat, nor any combination of them, would seem able to stop Carter from coming to the convention in July with by far the largest number of delegates, though a first-ballot nomination may still be beyond his reach (at least without pre-convention negotiations or "brokering" with the rest of the pack). Any attempt to "stop" Carter would now seem a repudiation of the whole long primary process and, even more importantly, of the Democrats of the South (who, we should remind ourselves, have been turning increasingly toward the Republican Party).

But there are serious problems about Carter for Democrats on the Left. They lie not in the vagueness of his positions on the issues but, to the contrary, in their quite specific conservatism. His outsider and even "anti-government" stance tends to mask the clearly defined conservatism of his views on the proper role of government in matters ranging from national defense to the whole range of domestic issues. We do not believe that his passivist positions on the economic and social issues are what attract the Democratic voters. Poll after poll has shown that substantial majorities favor strong government intervention to control big business' hold on the economy and to bring about a more just distribution of the country's wealth. So there must be other grounds for the popularity of Jimmy Carter.

In this issue, Charles P. Henderson Jr. analyzes one element of that appeal, the fundamentalist Christian convictions which he holds and freely expresses. In

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Henderson's strong words, "A political leader who promises to live up to the ideal of love, before the simple requirements of justice have been met, exposes himself to a credibility gap of fatal proportions." Certainly, Carter's religiousness, or religiosity, is an important element in what must be called his charisma. Religion and politics can make an explosive mixture.

So what can Democrats on the Left still hope to do? There can be no clear prescription except to go on working to elect delegates on their end of the spectrum, hoping that their influence can at least affect the nature of the party's platform. It looks as if Carter will end up running on that platform and it could still be important to have had a hand in building it.

Anniversary of Arrogance

Just one year after the final American exodus from Indochina, two sickening reminders of our long, sad experience there are in the news. The lesser of them is the publication in Hanoi newspapers of the account by North Vietnam's senior General, Van Tien Dung, of the shameful rout of our man Thieu's forces in the highlands of Vietnam which left Saigon and the rest of South Vietnam open to rapid capture. "Why such a retreat?," asks General Dung, who saw no military necessity for the collapse and who was, in fact, preparing for a long campaign leading to victory in 1976. Indeed Hanoi's field general was heading *north* toward the highlands' main city, Pleiku, when he learned that Thieu's strong forces had inexplicably pulled out of their fortified positions in the whole area, leaving the road south to Saigon wide open. Six weeks later Thieu's resistance ended and the panic began.

Americans will recall two elements of the ensuing evacuation. One was the swift realization that Nixon's policy called "Vietnamization," meaning that the South Vietnamese would have to do the actual fighting while we gave them more arms than they could use, was a total failure. A corrupt regime installed by Washington was shown to have all the materiel and none of the spirit needed to fight that war. And, even as Thieu's troops fled south and melted away into the countryside, Ford, Kissinger and the Pentagon were belligerently demanding more billions of military supplies for a dictatorship that had lost all will or ability to fight, and attacking Congress for refusing to prolong the agony of that hopeless "cause."

Then there were the refugees, the most painful part of the story to recall. Remember "Operation Babylift"? In those emotion-laden last days, with the strong propagandistic support of our government and amid talk of an imminent "blood bath," some 2,073 Indochinese children were scooped up from orphanages and even from the streets and loaded on planes to be brought here to a new life far from the ravaging war. Warm American hearts and eager hands reached out to these innocents, welcoming them to the land of the free.

What, in a year, has happened to these true victims of a war so much of our making? *The Washington Post* reports (April 25) that of all those children only nine have been legally adopted. The other 2,064 are in various kinds of legal limbo, wrapped not in swaddling clothes but in red tape. And they are in that condition for a terrible reason.

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It turns out that as many as two-thirds of these "orphans" are not that at all. They have families back in Vietnam at least as agonized by their loss as are the American parents who would adopt them if they could. The worst part of these triple tragedies—those of the children themselves and of their two sets of parents, worlds apart—is that it was all unnecessary, hasty and thoughtless, done for reasons of state, not humanity. Writing about it at the time (*The Nation*, April 19, 1975), Desmond Smith denounced the "Babylift" as "body-snatching at the worst, accompanied as it is by pious declarations that we are 'saving the children. . . .' " The damage, in many cases, will be irreparable for these frail transplants and hardly less so for their parents, real and foster, on both sides of the Pacific.

As for the 130,000 other Indochinese refugees who left their homes and came to these shores when their old world collapsed just a year ago, their situation, though less dramatic, is far from brilliant. An Associated Press report on these uprooted people shows 40 per cent unemployment, severe psychological strains, low school attendance and generally bad health. Many of their American sponsors are as disillusioned with the Indochinese as the latter are baffled and frustrated by the life they must lead here. The process of acculturation is always painful and it is particularly hard when it is abrupt and not by choice.

Americans should perhaps take this first anniversary of the end of the Indochina war as an occasion to reflect on our collective responsibility for this mountainous accumulation of misery. We elected governments inflated with what former Senator Fulbright called "the arrogance of power," which for a whole generation tried to enlist Indochina's 50 million people in an ideological crusade in which they could find no stake. We failed, of course, but they, not we, are the victims of this huge miscalculation. Many of those who stayed in their own countries are suffering the consequences of all this, particularly in Cambodia, where the regime seems determined to uproot all traces of the hated past at whatever human cost. But it should be absolutely clear by now that the American intervention in Southeast Asia, a total failure by any standard of judgment, contributed enormously to the scale of suffering which we are called upon to remember just one year after the killing stopped.

And Finally He Apologized*

This year's Presidential campaign has been vulgarized by so much right-wing rhetoric of the saber-rattling, chauvinist sort that perhaps we should not be surprised at the resurrection also of the McCarthyite smear. The source of it, however, is a little startling—as is the target.

It seems that Vice President Rockefeller, at an off-the-record session in Georgia in mid-April, said, inferred, implied, or insinuated that the staff of that most straight-arrow, all-out anti-Communist cold warrior of Democratic candidates, Senator Jackson, had been infiltrated by Communists.

*There were some apologies in the McCarthy era, too. Usually, they came too late to do any good to the injured persons. All the Vice President said this time in his apology was that "it was a mistake to have engaged in unsubstantiated speculation. . . ." It was not a handsome apology.

Rockefeller once had a reputation, won against a very weak field, for being a relatively enlightened and even "liberal" Republican. This ambitious billionaire politician was regularly hailed by establishment pillars like James Reston of *The New York Times* as a "public servant" struggling against all odds to bring sense and efficiency to a chaotic government. His highly paid staff, which for a long time included Henry A. Kissinger, even gave him an appearance of "vision." He was always busy peering into the country's future, while simultaneously prescribing for its current ills as he and his thinkers saw them. These glimpses of what lay ahead for us all have generally featured hair-raisingly aggressive policies toward the Communist world, including an attempt a while back to change the nature of our nuclear weaponry from a mere threat to a real presence—by actually using some of it somewhere and thus diminishing the terror of it.

So Nelson Rockefeller has had communism on his mind for a long time and it is therefore perhaps no wonder that he now pretends to find that a Democratic Presidential candidate—one who shares Rockefeller's views on most questions—has real live Communists on his staff. His motivation in making this charge is more puzzling than pleasant to contemplate. It may be attributable simply to the fact that he has been left out of the GOP struggle to retain the White House. Ever since Ford discarded him as a running mate he apparently has had a hard time keeping quiet while Ford and Reagan outdo each other in severity toward the ideological opponent. Joe McCarthy found this sort of charge a good way to get one's name in the papers; depressingly, it still is—and probably it always will be.

The difference in this case is one of "responsibility." McCarthy did all his dirty damage as just one among ninety-six Senators, and that was bad enough. But Rockefeller is Vice President of the United States. Furthermore, he was chairman last year of the President's commission on CIA abuses and, as such, was privy to all sorts of arcane knowledge which might lend credibility to his charge against the hapless "Scoop" Jackson. Unfortunately for Rockefeller, the names of his targets have become known. They are not the mere numbers McCarthy brandished as "evidence" that the State Department was honeycombed with Communist cells in the early 1950s. And the names that have "leaked" from the Rockefellerian slander sessions are simply ridiculous—entirely apart from the nature of their employer, that well-known enemy of the Kremlin, Sen. Henry M. Jackson.

One is Richard Perle, known to the Kremlin and the U.S. Senate as the Jackson staff man who wrote the stiff papers the Senator employed to block most-favored-nation status for Russia until the persecution of Jews in that country was at least lessened. The other is even more improbable, not to say outrageous: Dorothy Fosdick, daughter of the Rockefeller family pastor, Harry Emerson Fosdick, who has known the Vice President personally for a good fifty years. (Her father even officiated at Nelson Rockefeller's first wedding.) She was once a foreign service officer and served as assistant to the Secretary General of the U.S. delegation to the United Nations founding conference in San Francisco in 1945—not, as Rockefeller claims in these private sessions, to Alger Hiss, who was the chief staff man for the U.N. in process of formation.

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There is so much comic ineptitude in all this that it would be nice to be able to laugh it off as just one more in a long series of Rockefeller gaffes. But the humor is of the black sort and the laughter turns hollow. Too many lives were wrecked by this kind of comedy, well within living memory, for Americans to dismiss this slander as sheer foolishness or even mischief. Rockefeller should know that, but he evidently does not; despite his lavish staff, the man is almost unteachable. Miss Fosdick, situated as she is, can turn aside the Vice President's mutterings and say they raise no "personal problems" for her but do raise "a problem for Nelson Rockefeller." In the early days of what came to be known as the McCarthy era, the victims of the Wisconsin Senator used to say that kind of complacent thing. The hysteria he generated turned things around and they soon in fact became the "problem." Is that the disgusting tradition the Vice President is frivolously trying to revive?

Mrs. Luce Regrets

Clare Boothe Luce! A strange name to find in the pages of *The New Republic* (April 17). The editors asked Mrs. Luce to review Golda Meir's *My Life*—perhaps, because they are both powerful women—and she wrote back to explain why she could not review the former Israeli Prime Minister's memoir. The letter, which of course amounted to a long review, was then run as such. It is a common literary device, as Mrs. Luce, who has been around words all her life without quite getting to know them, was well aware.

Mrs. Luce's reasons for not being able to do the "formal review" *The New Republic* editors requested are odd. They are three. One is that "I could not write a word of criticism about this heroic old woman"—and indeed, there is none in this letter-review. Another is that Golda Meir's "rise to greatness" Mrs. Luce finds "one of the great mysteries of the human spirit," and so, apparently, not to be criticized or even reviewed. Finally, her quasi-block stems from the fact that "I feel very deeply about the survival of Israel, which it does not seem to me can be taken for granted." The inference is hard to draw, but perhaps Mrs. Luce meant that she might write something that would add to the perils of the state of Israel.

Mrs. Luce is accustomed to power. In her world, it is the most chic of all attributes. Perhaps there really is something she could write that would damage the cause of Israel, but it does not spring to mind. In the course of her nonreview, Mrs. Luce "cannot forbear mentioning" that Golda Meir believed that "there was one leader of the West who did not betray her—or Israel: Richard Nixon." Her nonforbearance is natural in the light of her long and ardent support of right-wing Republicanism. (At one point, it might be noted, these views led her to invent the term "globaloney" to express the isolationist distaste for Wendell Willkie's "one world," but after World War II it was fine to have one world as long as it was largely a world for Americans to play with.) It would be too much to expect of her that she should attribute a part of Nixon's nonbetrayal to cold-war considerations, with Russia lined up, for its own ambitious reasons, on the side of the Arabs. And Mrs. Luce joins the newly chic neo-conservatives in deploring the "recrudescence of isolationism" in the wake of "the U.S. defeat" in Vietnam.

The character of Mrs. Luce must be almost the opposite of Golda Meir's, except for the quality of determination. Perhaps that is why the rich, spoiled, fashionable American woman is so fascinated by the nature of the dedicated, direct, but subtle woman who rose from poverty to become a strong Prime Minister of Israel.

If there is any moral in all this, it is that it will not be the Clare Boothe Luces of the world who will do much to preserve the state of Israel. The United States must have a much steadier course in regard to Israel than is contained in a policy of superpower confrontation, one of whose by-products is support for Israel in the world's present configuration. That could change if different strategic considerations became paramount.

In the last analysis, the real basis for long-term American support for Israel is moral. Israel must survive as an independent state, or all our values would go down with it. That kind of feeling, widespread in this country, is a much surer guarantee of full American backing for Israel's independence than the hard-boiled but sentimental language of Mrs. Luce's "letter" to *The New Republic*.

The Squander Policy

Two and a half years after the Arab oil boycott, triggered by the Yom Kippur war (but stimulated by the natural greed of the oil-producing nations), the United States has nothing that could be called an energy policy. We are squandering the world's fossil fuels as if they had just become fashionable and were endlessly replaceable. Anything like austerity or even government planning is apparently unthinkable in an election season.

In that light, it is amazing, as Robert Sherrill pointed out in last week's issue ("The Furnace Gadget You Can't Buy") that the energy business bureaucracy, aided by its federal friends, has been able to throttle a device, called Save-Fuel, which costs about $10 and would, if generally used, save just about enough fuel to make this country independent of foreign sources. The excuse has been based on dubious attacks on the safety of this gadget, which saves fuel by automatically closing a damper when furnaces are not running. In Europe, similar devices have for years saved billions of barrels of oil and its equivalent in gas, with almost perfect safety records.

Yet we still allow the utilities to set safety standards—in their own short-term interests. The "anti-government" politicians might ponder that as our fuel imports soar toward 50 per cent.

Alexander Laing (1903-1976)

Another of our cherished poets has died, Alexander Laing of Norwich, Vt. and of Dartmouth College. An old friend of *The Nation* and the sturdiest of civil libertarians, he had drunk deep of the sweet stream of native radicalism that nourishes the only sound variety of "American individualism." Only a short time ago, on April 13, he and some friends had celebrated Thomas Jefferson's birthday. When he died, he was preparing an essay on Jefferson that

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was to have taken up the whole Fourth of July issue of this magazine. We can be sure it would have had nothing in common with the commercial and official exploitation that has made the very word "bicentennial" an offense to eye and ear and nostril. The harsh, bitter self-criticism that America needs at this moment, a criticism based on absolute belief in the rights of man, on policies of peace and a generous internationalism, and on a decent compassion, is of course expressed by our poets as by no one else. As Alex Laing put it in his poem, "Lines for an Inauguration" (in *Brant Point*, his very recent book of poems):

We, the harsh gods,
the Americans,
sullen, cruel, vindictive . . .

As so many of our poets have done, he shows us all too eager "to reach round the bending earth" with our bombs and "send children running" in flames to their deaths. The provocation had to be powerful indeed, for so gentle and kindly a spirit to write in this way. These are not characteristic thoughts from this lover of sailing ships and poet of exquisitely precise perceptions. Yet he, with Pennington Haile, edited *Groundswell*, the occasional broadside that challenged the premises and hypocrisy of the war in Vietnam. With the late Ramon Guthrie, he was at the center of a unique group of poets at Dartmouth for whom artistic and political sensibility were but two aspects of our shared humanity. For them it was self-evident that the finer the sensibility, the keener must be the understanding of the humane, truly free spirit.

Are such ideas obsolete? Sometimes one would almost believe they must be. Be that as it may, such ideas breed true souls. An unpublished poem by Ramon Guthrie—written in his last days, which were full of physical agony and mental anguish—best tells us the meaning of a life like Alex Laing's. His wife, Veronica, and his son, David, his students, his fellow poets, and perhaps some of the unknown multitudes about whom he so often thought, will understand just what his old comrade was feeling when he wrote his "Note to a Friend":

Dear Alex,
When you come into the room,
something in me clicks and goes
human and I
no longer wish that I were dead.
Something in my mind
feels a sudden rareness.
I can laugh and not feel numb
any longer. A kind of quiet joy
occurs inside of me
and I do not know my glum self
or rather
I know myself and am no longer glum.

M.L. Rosenthal

DEAD END IN IRELAND

WHAT IF ENGLAND PULLS OUT?

ANDREW BOYD

Belfast

Four hundred years ago Edmund Spenser observed that many people believed that "Almighty God had not yet appointed the time for Ireland's reformation," and that so long as Ireland remained in turmoil it would be "the cause of some secret scourge that would come upon England." Today as the bombs of the Irish Republican Army tear the limbs from terrified civilians in England's crowded cities, railway stations and trade exhibitions it must seem that the secret scourge has come at last. Ireland remains in turmoil, partitioned and depressed; its violence spreads to England.

The struggle between England and Ireland, the most enduring conflict in European history, has lasted now for more than 800 years, and countless times throughout those centuries England has been warned of the dangers it incurs by trying to subjugate the Irish or interfere in their affairs. Gladstone saw Ireland as a gathering thunderstorm. Sydney Smith, a generation before Gladstone, asked why Englishmen should "endanger their Church and State" for the sake of the "ten or twelve great Orange families" who dominated Ireland. When John Devoy, the Irish Fenian leader, died in the United States in 1928 *The Times* of London described him as one of the most dangerous enemies the British people had ever known. Ireland unfree, declared Padraig Pearse, leader of the Easter Rising in Dublin 1916, will never be at peace—nor, he could have added, will England. The more prudent of the English politicians know this. William Whitelaw, who was Secretary of State for Northern Ireland in 1972 and 1973, and Lord Carrington, who was Minister at the Home Office during Edward Heath's Premiership, have both admitted that until Ireland is united England will never be free of involvement in Irish affairs. They also know that Ireland cannot be united without a civil war that would almost inevitably spread to Britain.

Edmund Spenser was not a prophet, but he knew Ireland, having served as an administrator in that country, and in 1596 he wrote *A View of the Present State of Ireland*. Like all Englishmen of his generation and class he saw the Irish as "a savage nation" who "resisted better government and civility," not because of any occult influence or supernatural design but because of England's ill-conceived attempts to subdue them—"the unsoundness of the counsels and plots ofttimes laid for [Ireland's] reformation or faintness in effecting or following the same." Spenser's view of Ireland in 1596 would be

Andrew Boyd, a frequent contributor, is the author of Holy War in Belfast (*Grove Press*).

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essentially the view held today by Enoch Powell, John Biggs-Davison, Airey Neave and other gentlemen of the English Tory class.

The Anglo-Irish conflict, to put the whole complicated affair in its simplest terms, consists of the failure of the English finally to conquer and subdue Ireland, while the Irish, for their part, have not been able to drive the English finally and decisively out of their country. In 1922 England withdrew from Southern Ireland (now the Republic of Ireland) but remained in Ulster where it had the support of the Protestant majority and where, in any case, most of "the great Orange families" still lived—the Londonderrys, the Grosvenors, the Brookes, Hamiltons, Chichesters and Clarks.

The 800 years of Anglo-Irish conflict were put into one paragraph by Eamon de Valera when, in 1945, he replied to Winston Churchill, who, in a victory speech had castigated the Republic of Ireland for remaining neutral during World War II. Churchill had spoken proudly of the year, following the retreat from Dunkirk, when Britain had stood alone against Hitler's Germany. In his reply de Valera conceded Churchill's right to be proud, but, he asked, "could he not find in his heart the generosity to acknowledge that there is a small nation that has stood alone, not for one year or two, but for several hundred years against aggression, that endured spoliation, was clubbed many times into insensibility but that each time on returning, consciousness took up the fight anew, a small nation that could never be got to accept defeat and has never surrendered her soul."

The first invasion of Ireland, by the Anglo-Normans of Wales, took place in 1171 A.D. There were times during the subsequent centuries when the struggle between the two nations seemed to favor the Irish; other times when the English were victorious. The first of the Anglo-Normans, though militarily successful, were soon absorbed into Irish Celtic society, becoming "more Irish than the Irish themselves"—whereupon a Parliament in Kilkenny decreed that people of the English race should not speak the Irish language or wear the Irish style of clothing.

As the two nations struggled for the ownership of Ireland during the three and a half centuries between the Norman Invasion and the Protestant Reformation in England, the boundaries of the territorial realm established by the English altered considerably. Then, to make the whole affair immeasurably more complicated, the Irish rejected Protestantism and adhered to the ancient creeds and rituals of the Roman Catholic faith. Later came the confiscation of Celtic lands in Ulster, the settlement of English and Scottish Protestants, ancestors of today's Ulster Loyalists, and further land confiscations under Oliver Cromwell.

Scarcely ten years before the arrival of the Protestants in Ulster, Spenser noted the despair with which many Englishmen regarded their country's involvement in Ireland, some of them wishing, as so many must also wish today, that Ireland would sink forever beneath the waves of the Atlantic, that the whole island, as Spenser put it "were a sea pool." But such talk, he further observed, was that "of desperate men who wish the utter ruin of what they cannot redress," rather than the views of "grave counselors" who know that even the most difficult political problem may "through wisdom, be mastered and subdued."

Except for Gladstone, who in the 1880s realized that Irish self-government was the only peaceful way to end the Anglo-Irish conflict, England has always lacked "grave counselors" when dealing with Ireland, though there has never been a shortage of fools and desperate men with reckless remedies. Sydney Smith wrote in his famous *Peter Plymley Letters* that "the moment the very name of Ireland is mentioned the English seem to bid adieu to common feeling, common prudence, and common sense, and to act with the barbarity of tyrants and the fatuity of idiots."

The present phase of the conflict, which has been confined mainly to the Six Counties of Northern Ireland, has been immeasurably worsened by policies which have been ineffective in themselves or ineffective because they were not decisively implemented. Furthermore, within the period of little more than four years, from August 1969 until March 1974, four different British politicians have been responsible for Northern Ireland and every one of them has tried markedly different remedies. In 1969 James Callaghan, who was then Home Secretary, produced a list of reforms which, he hoped, would appease Ulster's Catholic minority and reconcile the two communities. But he practically guaranteed the failure of those reforms by entrusting their implementation to a Unionist administration under James Chichester-Clark. When Reginald Maudling replaced Callaghan in the Home Office in June 1970, the British Army and the Unionist politicians resumed an aggressive attitude toward the Catholics. During Maudling's term of office the internment camps were built at Long Kesh and at Magilligan, people were imprisoned without trial or charge, many were tortured, thirteen were shot dead on Bloody Sunday in Derry City, and eventually the whole apparatus of government at Stormont had to be suspended and direct rule imposed from London. Under that rule, when Whitelaw was Secretary of State, plans were laid for a power-sharing administration. When Whitelaw went his successor, Merlyn Rees, succumbed to threats and pressure of the Loyalist paramilitarists. The "faintness" which Edmund Spenser observed is as evident today as it was in the late 16th century.

Merlyn Rees is now convinced that "there is no way" to reconcile the Protestant majority and the Catholic minority in Northern Ireland. Yet when he took office as Secretary of State in March 1974 he was quite sure that, given the opportunity to discuss their differences freely and frankly, the people of Northern Ireland "could and would" find a solution to their problems. A Constitutional convention was duly elected and asked to suggest institutions of government in which the Catholics and the Protestants would share power. Predictably, the convention failed and proved, once again, that the Protestant majority in Northern Ireland would no more share power with their Catholic neighbors in Ulster than they would accept the reunification of Ireland. Rees's Constitutional convention was a costly and exasperating experiment to prove what had been obvious for many generations. Richard Rose, a professor of politics at the University of Strathclyde, author of two books on Northern Ireland, and England's

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academic authority on the subject of Ulster, now admits that he, like Merlyn Rees, "cannot prescribe a cure for a disturbance that appears organic."

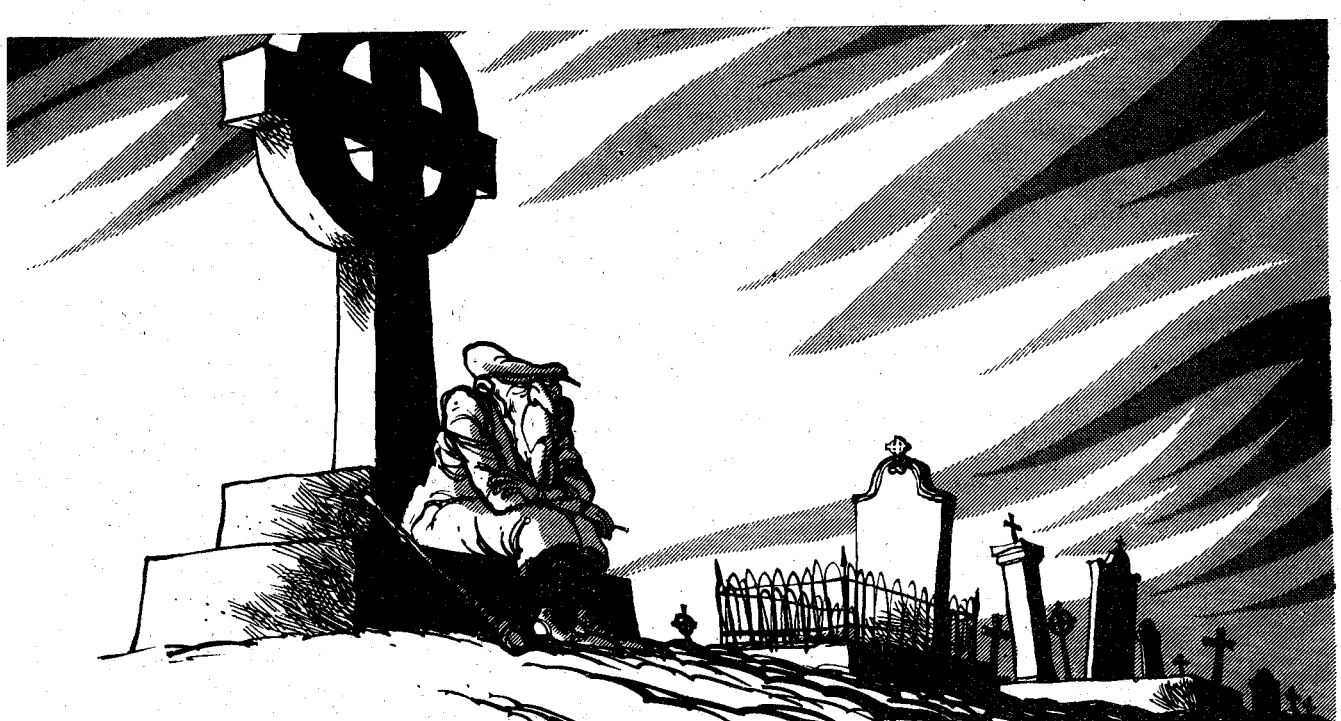
Every possible form of government has been considered for Northern Ireland—Unionist majority rule, power sharing with the Catholics, an independent Ulster—until, everything else being rejected, the English have been forced to reimpose direct rule, and that is a form of administration which they themselves do not like. But the power-sharing administration which they would prefer cannot be imposed. Indeed the power-sharing executive which William Whitelaw so painstakingly established at the Sunningdale conference in the autumn of 1973 was overthrown the following May when the Loyalists organized a general strike that almost throttled the economic life of Northern Ireland. The Loyalists succeeded because neither the British Government nor the British Army was prepared to take serious action against what they saw as the armed might of Loyalist paramilitary movements such as the 50,000-strong Ulster Defense Association, the Ulster Volunteer Force and other organizations less conspicuous, perhaps, but well-armed.

England had decided, long ago, that Ulster—meaning Loyalist Ulster—was not to be coerced, not even when Ulster was breaking the law and threatening armed rebellion against the decisions and will of Parliament. During the Loyalist general strike the British Army stood aside while Protestant private armies manned roadblocks and issued permits for the public to draw petrol and other essentials. The radio broadcast which Harold Wilson made at the time of the strike was not the assertion of state authority which most people expected; it was a sneering retreat from the Loyalist threats.

In circumstances such as these the "grave counselors," if any exist, are ignored and desperation again takes hold of politicians and administrators, some of whom now see the solution in the complete and final withdrawal of England from Ireland. This is a view held at one extreme by the Council of the Provisional IRA, and at the other extreme by members of the British House of Commons and House of Lords. Leo Abse, a Labour M.P., and Lord Bradwell, a Labour peer, now speak for those English people who believe their government should withdraw the troops from Northern Ireland.

Mr. Abse's view is that if Catholics and Protestants want to murder one another in Northern Ireland it is none of England's business. Lord Bradwell thinks that British withdrawal would hasten the reunification of Ireland. A "Recall the Troops" pressure group is active in England. The families of the soldiers serving in Ulster are eager to have the army withdrawn, and as quickly as possible. That is also the view of the fringe Left as represented by Eamon McCann, an international Socialist who used to be active in the Northern Ireland Civil Rights movement. In McCann's opinion "Britain should get out of Northern Ireland now. . . because Britain has no right in any part of Ireland."

The more optimistic advocates of withdrawal believe that the Ulster Loyalists are stubborn and belligerent only because England has always supported their determined opposition to Irish nationalism; they consequently assume that if English support were withdrawn the Loyalists would be glad to make peace with the rest of Ireland. Many leaders of Sinn Fein and of the Provisional IRA also refuse to believe that the Loyalists regard the Catholics and the Republicans as their enemies. In December 1974, David O'Connell, Chief of Staff of the Provisional IRA, was quoted as being "genuinely surprised that the Provisionals



Oliphant, The Denver Post

"Here I Am, the Last Livin' Person in Ireland, and I Can't Remember If I'm Catholic or Protestant!"

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were regarded as the enemy by the Protestants." The Official IRA, from which the Provisionals broke away in the autumn of 1969, pretends that the Protestant working class and the Catholic working class are in reality united in search of socialism. Eamon McCann, for his part, assumes that "the departure of the British Army would establish one of the essential preconditions for peace by making it clear to all concerned that British Ulster, and all that goes with it, is gone forever."

No doubt if the English did withdraw, Northern Ireland would cease to be British territory, yet not even the Provisional IRA would risk a sudden withdrawal. What the Republicans want, according to David O'Connell, is "a British declaration of intent to withdraw" and that, he says, is "a basic objective of the Republican movement." It is also what many politicians in Southern Ireland imagine would "bring the Northern Protestants to their senses." The Southern Irish Government says little either way about withdrawal, though Conor Cruise O'Brien, who is Minister for Posts and Telegraphs in that administration, passionately wants the British to remain because, in his view, withdrawal means instant civil war. Ruairi Brugha, the Fianna Fail (Opposition) spokesman on Ulster affairs thinks it would help if the English said they no longer approved of Northern Ireland's opposition to the reunification of Ireland.

A declaration of intent to withdraw from Northern Ireland or a statement from London in favor of Irish reunification would certainly be of political significance to Irish Republicans; it would dismay many Ulster Loyalists, but it would most certainly not bring them "to their senses," if by that is meant that they would become reconciled to the inevitability of Irish national reunification.

For the Ulster Unionists, membership in the United Kingdom is third on the list of priorities. First, there is the determination not to unite with Southern Ireland; next comes the urge to regain control of Northern Ireland. Ulster Unionism includes other attitudes that are much more dangerous than the mere desire to retain British citizenship. There is, for instance, the Orange Order which since 1795 has been mobilizing and indoctrinating Ulster Protestants against Irish nationalism. There is, among Unionists almost universal hatred and fear of Ireland's Roman Catholic majority and intense hatred of the Catholics who live within Ulster itself. That hatred is deep, apparently congenital and virtually ineradicable. It has led to the most ghastly atrocities, torture and sectarian murder on a large scale. On the night of April 13 two little Catholic boys, aged 8 and 12, were seized by a gang of Protestant youths, soaked in petrol and set alight. In the same part of Belfast some three years earlier another Protestant gang murdered a mentally deficient Catholic child as he was saying his prayers. That is what Northern Ireland has been like for a very long time. In 1920, when Ireland was partitioned and the Northern Ireland Government set up, similar atrocities were being committed; they caused Winston Churchill to describe the Loyalists of Ulster as "worse than cannibals."

The anti-Catholic hatred is often expressed in pamphlets by Loyalist leaders such as Rev. Martin Smyth, Grand Master of the Orange Order, and by Ian Paisley, whose *Protestant Telegraph* is nothing but a weekly incitement to hatred. Paisley, Smyth and innumerable other spokesmen for the Ulster Loyalists are convinced that the Kremlin and the Vatican, Marxism and Roman Catholicism, the Communist Party and the Irish Republican Army are all combined in an international conspiracy to destroy Ulster. In 1969 Paisley told the students of the Bob Jones University in South Carolina that "the Marxists and the Romanists were united under the leadership of Bernadette Devlin." Martin Smyth wrote in 1972 that the Loyalists of Ulster did not trust Roman Catholics and would, therefore, "be loath to employ them, live with them, or work with them." Such statements are the substance of Ulster Loyalty.

It is difficult, therefore. to see how people holding the views expressed by Smyth, Paisley and other Ulster Loyalist leaders would "be brought to their senses" by a British withdrawal from Northern Ireland or even a declaration of intent to withdraw. There are upward of 200,000 armed Loyalists, all determined, whatever the consequences, never to be absorbed into an all-Ireland state. And it does not matter whether that state be a united Irish Republic, some sort of federal Ireland with regional autonomy for the Six Northern Counties, or the complicated system of cantons outlined in the Provisional IRA's blueprint for their new Ireland (Eire Nua).

No doubt there must have been a time when the withdrawal of the English would have brought some sort of peace to Ireland, though it is idle even to imagine when that time might have been. Certainly it has been evident since at least the earlier part of the 19th century that the Protestants of Ulster regard themselves as a race separate and distinct from the other inhabitants of Ireland, and since 1886 they have shown a determination to resist by force of arms any plans to merge them with the Roman Catholic majority in an all-Ireland state. Whether they are reasonable in holding that opinion or justified is another matter, but it is an opinion that must seriously be considered when trying to assess the consequences of a British withdrawal from Northern Ireland. It is an opinion that certainly makes nonsense of the benign assumption that the presence of the English is the only obstacle to peace in Ireland. In 1922 Eamon de Valera told Lloyd George that if England "stood aside" the Unionists of Northern Ireland and the Republicans of Southern Ireland "could effect a complete reconciliation and there would be no need for anyone to use force." But suppose, asked Frank Pakenham (Lord Longford) in his book *Peace by Ordeal*, Britain did stand aside and the Ulster Unionists remained adamant—what then?

If in 1922 Eamon de Valera was ready to risk civil war with the Ulster Unionists, it is quite clear that the Republic of Ireland would not willingly involve itself in such a conflict today. The general impression given by the political speechmakers of all parties in Southern Ireland is that if Britain withdraws from Northern Ireland the Republic will remain neutral, thus leaving the Catholic minority in Northern Ireland to bear the full force of a

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Loyalist military attack.

Even now, with the English still in possession, Loyalist politicians are urging the British Army to deal more ruthlessly with the Republican population or, failing that, to allow the Protestant paramilitary organizations freedom to invade the Catholic ghettos and "sort out" the IRA. If the British Army were to leave Northern Ireland the sorting out would begin almost immediately. The Loyalist politicians would form a provisional government, call together the group which they call the Ulster Army Council and mobilize all their armed forces. The Catholics, least of all the Provisional IRA, have not even tried to estimate the armed strength of the Loyalists. In the sort of emergency that would be created if the British withdrew, the Loyalist armed forces would consist of the Royal Ulster Constabulary and its vast armory, the RUC Reserve, the former B Special Constabulary, the Ulster Defense Regiment, possibly the Northern Ireland units of the British Territorial Army Reserve, the Ulster Defense Association, and smaller private armies such as the Ulster Volunteer Force and an organization misleadingly called the Down Orange Welfare Association. A call to arms would mobilize all these forces almost immediately. In manpower and weapons they outnumber the Provisional IRA not a hundred to one but more likely a thousand to one. A spokesman for at least one of these Loyalist organizations has predicted an attack on the Catholics if the British withdraw from Northern Ireland.

The most vulnerable victims of such an attack would be the Catholics living in Belfast and in the predominantly Protestant areas within a 30-mile radius of the city. Catholics living in the larger ghettos, such as West Belfast, might be able to organize defense, but isolated Catholics unable to defend themselves would either have to flee or be murdered in their beds. There are other parts of Northern Ireland, the city of Derry, for example, where the Protestants, being in the minority locally, would probably suffer the same fate. Lord O'Neill, a former Prime Minister of Northern Ireland, stated on April 14 during a House of Lords debate, that if the British Army were withdrawn from Northern Ireland the ensuing civil war would spread to Glasgow, to Liverpool and to London itself. Ulster would become another Katanga or an Angola.

Ninety years ago, in the year of Gladstone's first Irish Home Rule crisis, A.V. Dicey, an English constitutional lawyer, commented that if Ireland had been "left for any lengthened period to herself, some form of rule adapted to the needs of the country would, in all probability, have been established. Whether Catholics or Protestants would have been the dominant elements in the state. . .are matters of uncertain speculation." And so it still is today. Some fear that the outcome of the kind of civil war that would result from a British withdrawal from Northern Ireland would be two objectionable little tyrannies in Ireland, one dominated by the Loyalists in Ulster, or in what remained of Ulster, and the other run according to the principles of Sinn Fein, a Gaelic term whose English translation is "ourselves alone." □

RELIGION OR JUSTICE?

THE POLITICS OF LOVE

CHARLES P. HENDERSON Jr.

Here we are, several decades into the era of secular man, when who should appear at the very center of American public life but a devout Southern Baptist, a born-again Christian who threatens to bring God back into fashion. Jimmy Carter speaks openly and freely of his deep religious convictions. He describes in some detail his spiritual odyssey, a journey which seems to bring him ever closer to God as he scales the heights of political power. When he was installed as Governor of Georgia, sensing the burdens of his office, he prayed more fervently than ever before. "In the seclusion of a little private room off the Governor's office," Carter now reports, "I spent more time on my knees than I did all the rest of my life put together."

Considering the years spent as Sunday School teacher, leader of men's Bible classes, and deacon of his hometown church in Plains, Ga., as well as the long hours devoted to volunteer missionary work in several Northern states, Carter's continued affirmation of his religion merits serious consideration. And in fact, the press has devoted as much attention to this subject as to any other issue in the campaign—a development which the candidate does not seem to regret. "When the media began to emphasize my beliefs," he said during the New York primary contest, "I did not know how to deal with it; whether to answer the questions or to say I didn't have a comment. I decided to tell the truth. If there are those who don't want to vote for me because I'm a deeply committed Christian, I believe they should vote for someone else."

The mounting interest in Carter's religion has shown itself in practically every news magazine, journal and tabloid in America. There have been lead stories in *New York* magazine and *The New York Times*. The secular press seems astonished that a major candidate for the Presidency should speak so frankly about his "very close, intimate and personal relationship with God." The *Times* article opens with the caption: "Carter's Evangelism Putting Religion Into Politics For The First Time Since '60." Religion editor, Kenneth A. Briggs, has this to say: "The question for the 51-year-old Southern Baptist is whether a deeply committed evangelical Christian can appeal to an overtly more secular culture with his frank

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admission of a conservative Protestant piety."

Though this question may be of considerable interest to some observers, particularly to analysts who estimate a candidate's appeal to various voting blocs, it obscures the more basic issue raised by Carter's sudden success. For Carter, like every other candidate in recent history, is fully cognizant of the unwritten commandment on the separation of politics and religion. In a thoroughly pluralistic America, no serious candidate would make the parochial views of his or her sect a public issue. On the contrary, when pressed on the point candidates without exception back away from the "religious issue." The standard was set by John Kennedy in his 1960 speech to the Greater Houston Ministerial Association. "Whatever issue may come before me as President, if I should be elected—on birth control, divorce, censorship, gambling, or any other subject—I will make my decision in accordance with. . . what my conscience tells me to be in the national interest, and without regard to outside religious pressure or dictate. . . . I believe in an America where the separation of church and state is absolute. . . . I believe in a President whose views on religion are his own private affair."

Richard Nixon put out a similar statement of his own in 1960, and Jimmy Carter has already done so this year: "I've never tried to use my position as a public official to promote my beliefs and I never would." Unfortunately such disclaimers, and the entire discussion of the "religious issue," obscure the overriding question that is posed by politics itself. If the candidate's religious convictions do not influence his decisions, then how does his conscience express itself? Is politics purely a matter of pragmatic and technical factors, or does the pursuit of justice involve ethical and even theological considerations? In my own view, the interrelationship between politics and religion is one of the central processes of American history. While the separation of church and state is not at issue, the subtle intermixing of the sacred and the secular is a constant element in Presidential politics. This factor, however, is largely ignored because most observers take the public disclaimers at face value. While all the candidates *say* that religion is not a factor, there is a subliminal, symbiotic relationship between the two realms.

There is a remarkable symmetry between the religious climate in the country and the style of leadership at the Presidential level. Consider for a moment how this dynamic has expressed itself in the years since World War II. During the last twenty-four years, three Presidents have risen to power through the process of popular election: Eisenhower, Kennedy and Nixon. During the Eisenhower years the major Protestant denominations enjoyed a period of unprecedented growth and affluence. Eisenhower's promises of peace and prosperity, his positive and rather low-key, Presbyterian piety, were well suited to the spirit of optimism and even complacency in the churches.

During the Kennedy era came a significant shift in mood. Despite warnings from certain quarters of the Protestant church, the election of a Roman Catholic President seemed to work hand and glove with a broadening spirit of ecumenism in the churches. Though he was hailed as the most secular President in recent times, Kennedy's dynamism and progressive spirit were echoed in the religious community by men like Martin Luther King Jr., Eugene Carson Blake, Bishops Robinson and Pike, and of course, Pope John XXIII.

The Nixon years were marked in the nation, as in the churches, by a spirit of retrenchment. The expansive optimism of the 1960s was replaced by divisiveness and by debilitating controversy. Disillusionment about Watergate and other scandals of the Nixon administration seemed to be matched by the sudden and dramatic disaffection of people from major faith groups.

At present there seems to be a serious crisis of leadership in the churches, and not only a crisis of leadership but a reaction against organized religion itself. There has been a steady erosion in the ranks of Protestant denominations and of Roman Catholicism. Meanwhile the initiative has been seized by smaller, independent sects. The country today is crowded with sects and schisms of a hundred varieties: from the charismatics to est (Erhard Seminars Training), from Esalen to bioenergetics. Dissatisfied with the offerings of established religion, people turn elsewhere for comfort and solace. Many of the new groups and movements share an anti-institutional, anti-Establishment bias which corresponds to the anti-government sentiment in politics. Obviously, Jimmy Carter is riding this wave. But there is something more positive, more powerful and ultimately more important at work.

In post-Watergate, post-Vietnam America a need is felt for someone or something to restore a sense of national purpose. The weakening of major faith groups, and the absence of strong, individual leaders in the religious community produces a spiritual *malaise*. In this situation, public figures who are sensitive to the mood of the people may be tempted to fill the leadership vacuum and usurp the legitimate function of religion. This temptation is particularly strong for Presidential candidates because, alone among politicians, the President is in a position to represent the whole population. Moreover, the absence of a clearly defined, common ideology means that the President, more than any other public figure, is called upon to express the words, the sentiments and the symbols which can bind the nation together.

I believe that Jimmy Carter is now the Democratic front runner because he has read the signs of the times with greater sensitivity than have the other candidates. He seems to understand that there is a strong call for the government to perform a distinctly sacral function. The question implicit in campaign '76 is whether the nation's Chief Executive should assume the role of religious leader. For that is precisely the role Carter has assumed.

One notes first of all his habit of slurring the distinctions between the sacred and the secular. He talks of the shared responsibilities of "political and religious leaders." He implies that the nation's social and spiritual problems spring from the same cause, and are subject to the same solutions. "With the shame of Watergate still with us and our 200th birthday just ahead," he said at the opening of his campaign, "it is time for us to reaffirm and to strengthen our ethical and political beliefs." "In our homes or at worship we are ever reminded of what we

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ought to do and what we ought to be. Our government can and must represent the best and highest ideals. . . ." These phrases, repeated in almost every speech, sound sufficiently vague and general. One can hardly take issue with "the best and the highest." One hesitates to object when Carter asserts that government can be "filled with compassion and love"—especially when one considers the alternative, as so recently displayed for us. Yet Carter's sweeping affirmations mask some critical distinctions between politics and the life of the spirit. And it is precisely the failure to sort out the distinctly religious dimension of American public life which accounts for a continuing sense of frustration about politics. Rather than operating as a distinct and creative force within the secular sphere, religion works at a subliminal level. It is hidden in the agenda of every campaign. And the legitimate contributions which religion may offer are diluted in the muddied waters of campaign oratory.

To disentangle the several threads of the problem, one must delineate the proper functions of religion. (I approach the problem as a Christian theologian, but a similar extrapolation could be made from the Jewish perspective as well.) In a society marred by injustice and oppression, in a world torn by conflict and violence, in a global society that seems to be bound and imprisoned by needless suffering and ultimately by death, Christianity affirms that there is a truth which transcends the apparently senseless facts of life. Christianity declares the reality of a just and loving God. And the church points to saints and apostles, prophets and preachers who have exhibited the love of God through personal example. Pre-eminent in Christian belief is the figure of Jesus Christ, who mediates between God and man. In the life, death and resurrection of Jesus, Christians find expressed a transcendent love. It is important to note precisely how the figure of Jesus operates in Christian piety, because the Christ symbol is an important archetype in Western culture. Rather than setting himself up as head of a hierarchical structure, Jesus identified with the people. As the apostle Paul expressed it: "He did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant." There is a subtle, secular analogue to this imagery in Populist politics. For Christ committed himself to "the people" without condition and without reservation. And it is the *unconditional* quality of his love which Christians identify as the key to his divinity.

In Christ the love of God is seen to be universal; the divine love reaches out to "all creatures great and small." This essentially theological notion of equality has informed Western ideals of equal justice. Like the love of God, the law should be impartial, should be administered with equity and "without respect for persons." It is at this point, however, that we encounter the first distinction between politics and religion. For Christianity affirms an ideal that has never been fully realized. Belief in the reality and ultimacy of unconditional love is maintained in the face of overwhelming evidence that such perfection can never be attained on earth. Religious leaders can in one sense overlook the tragic facts of life, but political leaders cannot.

For politics deals with goods and services which actually exist, with laws which may actually be enforced, with goals which may actually be achieved. Politics involves the use of power to play the interest of one person against another, one party against another, one nation against another. As distinct from the religious sphere, activities and decisions in politics are properly *conditioned* by the tragic circumstances of human existence. Though religious impulse may, for example, suggest an unconditional commitment to the problems of the urban poor, considerations of simple justice require something far less than love allows. Here we arrive at the very heart of the matter. Though our notion of equal justice springs in part from an ethic of love, in practice the requirements of justice may differ radically from the counsels of compassion.

A political leader who promises to live up to the ideal of love, before the requirements of simple justice have been met, exposes himself to a credibility gap of fatal proportions. There are countless examples of this mistake in Jimmy Carter's rhetoric, and even in his approach to policy. Consider Carter's stock affirmation: "Nowhere in the Constitution of the United States, or the Declaration of Independence, or the Bill of Rights, or the Emancipation Proclamation, or the Old Testament or the New Testament do you find the words 'economy' or 'efficiency.' Not that these words are unimportant. But you discover other words like *honesty*, *integrity*, *fairness*, *liberty*, *justice*, *courage*, *patriotism*, *compassion*, *love*—and many others which describe what a human being ought to be. These are also the same words which describe what a government of human beings ought to be" (Jimmy Carter: *Why Not the Best*?, p. 116).

Though Carter expresses his admiration for Reinhold Niebuhr, and even quotes Niebuhr, this statement in his autobiography flies in the face of the theologian's most important insight. As Niebuhr so often pointed out, love may be possible between individuals, but an entirely different set of conditions applies in the public sphere. The difficulty of appealing directly to love as a basis for making political decisions is self-evident in the advice which Carter borrows from a fellow Baptist with whom he worked as a missionary: "You need only to have two loves: one for God, and one for the person who happens to be standing in front of you at a given moment" (*Why Not the Best?*, p. 131). As a guide for interpersonal relationships such advice is profound; as a rule of thumb for the practicing politician it is a prescription for fiasco. One of the reasons why public officials rely so heavily upon their appointments secretaries is the need they have learned to protect themselves from overreaction to "the person who happens to be standing in front of you at a given moment."

"A nation's domestic and foreign policies. . .should be derived from the same standards of ethics, honesty and morality which are characteristic of the individual citizens of the nation," writes Carter. But in fact, while a public official can relate to the individuals in the house next door with certain standards of honesty, openness, even self-sacrifice, it is clearly inappropriate to approach a neighboring country on the same basis.

It is a sentimental illusion to believe that complex political problems can be solved by an appeal to "compassion and love." For the chief instrument of love is

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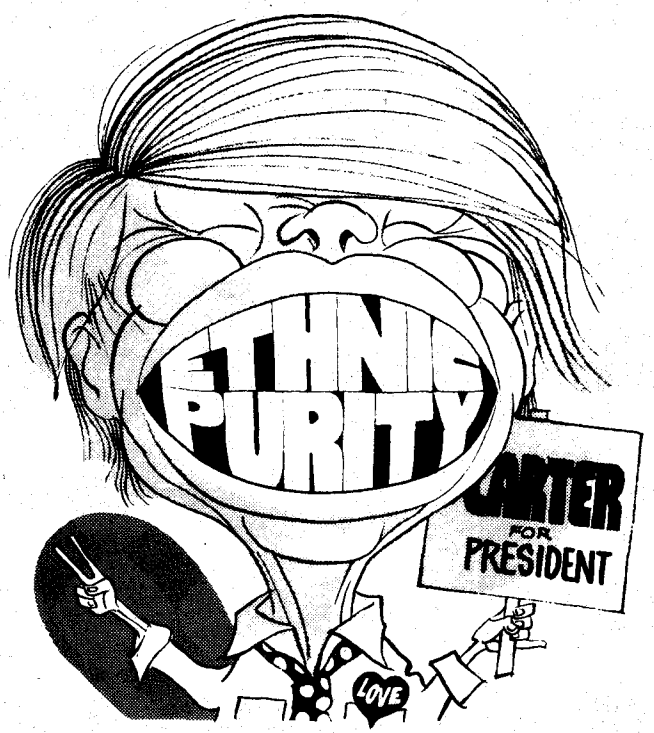
the power of persuasion, and justice can never be guaranteed by persuasion alone. Basic inequities spring from causes much deeper than the human will. For example, inequities of wealth reflect in part the maldistribution of natural resources, circumstances of geography and climate, even the capricious laws of heredity. These inequities are then strengthened and enforced by religious sanction and by "common sense" rationalization, so that the simple appeal to conscience always falls upon the deaf ear of entrenched privilege.

There is an inevitable tension in Carter between the rhetoric and the reality of his proposals. For example, speaking to a New York audience during the primaries, Carter argued: "I doubt that any other political candidate knows more about the attitude of the American people than I do. . . . And there is a tremendous amount of good will and legitimate concern about New York City's future. I don't have any doubt that as an elected President I can marshal the full support of the American people for the proper sharing of responsibility." That affirmation did not reassure his New York audience, however, for all the good



Renault, Sacramento Bee

will in the world would not correct the historic forces that have led to the demise of the city.

Carter's proposals in the area of urban policy involve a careful sorting out of conflicting interests. For example, he rejects a direct federal takeover of welfare programs, and favors a joint effort by federal and state governments. At the same time he urges direct payments of revenue-sharing moneys to the cities rather than to the states. Whether or not these proposals are read as sufficiently "compassionate" by urban voters, there are suburban voters who would reject even such modest steps as a violation of simple justice.

The legislative and taxing powers of the federal government are necessary precisely because people do not agree on the most basic requirements of justice. When there are such fundamental differences over questions of equity, one can hardly expect consensus on the requirements of love. These realities explain the intense reaction against Carter's "ethnic purity" remark. What looks like a basic right of association to one group, seems to be a clear violation of open-housing rights to others. When one group binds itself together with bands of steel, others find that an iron wall of separation has been set up.

Carter might have avoided this flap by a more careful choice of words, but the problem of racism lies at the root of American culture. Until that breach is repaired, anyone who appeals to feelings of "compassion and love" must expect the suspicion of duplicity. Even more difficult to explain by an appeal to "love and compassion" are Carter's positions on such difficult issues as capital punishment (which he favors) and abortion (which he opposes).

Though some analysts have accused Carter of being vague or evasive on the issues, a close reading of his speeches and policy statements leave me, at least, with a relatively clear understanding of his position. Carter has placed himself squarely in the center of the Democratic field. To a certain degree the centrist position is always the hardest to define. A centrist inevitably appears somewhat equivocal, at least to observers who are themselves placed to the right or the left of the candidate. In terms of his concrete proposals, there is nothing particularly new in Carter's platform; he stands on familiar political turf. If nominated in August he will call upon the same voting blocs, he will appeal to the same funding sources, he will use the same advertising methods as would any of the other candidates. What distinguishes Carter and what accounts for his success to date is his reading of the public mood, his perception that the public yearns for a leader who stands above the dark realities of politics.

There is a crazy ambiguity in American opinion about the President. The hope that we might elect a man of principle constantly plays itself against an equally profound skepticism about the political process itself. Everyone knows that politics involves compromise; yet there is a persistent hope that the person elected will somehow stand apart from the very forces that bring him to power. Hence tides of public opinion constantly flow between expectation and despair. And the officeholders, themselves torn by the conflicting attitudes, internalize the contradictory expectations to such a degree that it becomes difficult, if not impossible, to distinguish between the role and the reality. This in large part is what Presidents mean when they speak about "the burden of the office."

Much of that burden might be lifted, and public discourse greatly clarified, if the distinctions between politics and religion were drawn in clearer terms. For only as their separate functions are clearly seen, can their subtle connections be properly drawn.

In conclusion, I am left with an ambivalent judgment of Jimmy Carter. Certainly he appears to be an individual of authentic spirituality. His religion seems to sustain him in the grueling pursuit of public office. I suspect that his piety is a highly creative force in his personal life. In terms

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of its effect upon policy, it seems to reinforce his sense of empathy for the poor, a quality which has been lacking in the Oval Office for a number of years. As President, Carter could encourage the more creative, more humane impulses of American public opinion. But in the long haul Carter must resist the temptation to play the role of religious leader. For it is the tragic irony of politics that good intentions do not guarantee good results. In the last analysis, a feeling of love and compassion, however deeply held, is a poor substitute for equal justice. □

OLD, SICK, SCARED

Social Security: The Bad Dream

JOHN CONYERS Jr.

Social Security is such stuff as dreams are made on. And for most of the old or disabled in this country who exist on its benefits, the dreams have become a daily nightmare. For the government too, it is fast becoming a headache that intensifies as each year passes.

For both the nation's old and the government, the problems are rooted in the theory behind the system, which was criticized by some even as Roosevelt signed it into law and it was proclaimed the "beginning of a new era." Every element of the program—the level of benefits, employee and employer contributions, the ceiling above which income is not taxed, and the continued wage and payroll tax hikes in the almost total absence of government financing—guaranteed from the start that it would be regressive, hopelessly inadequate and financially unsound.

The first element, the level of benefits, insures that, instead of security, the elderly must struggle each day with deprivation and anxiety. Despite hikes in payments over the years and the addition of Medicare (which was supposed to eradicate the elderly's nagging fears of sickness and financial ruin), increasing numbers of the old live just at or under the official poverty line. The average yearly retirement benefit for an individual is $2,400—well below the current poverty line of $2,720. Worse still, what the average figure conceals is that close to 60 per cent of the elderly get far less than that; as many as a third receive as little as $1,600 a year. Based on Social Security's own calculations, 80 per cent of those receiving old-age pensions live on less than half the income they had before retiring (by comparison, pensioners in West Germany receive 81 per cent of their final earnings).

The program's supporters insist it was never intended to be the elderly's sole source of income. Instead, it was to supplement other income from private pensions, savings accounts and investments in stocks, bonds and property. What such defenders fail to consider is that few Americans can afford to save or invest during their working years, since they are already overburdened with current debt (consumer debt, excluding mortgage payments, soared above $200 billion in 1975). In fact, only a sixth of the single people drawing Social Security and a third of married couples have income from other sources.

And for the very poor, recent hikes in Social Security benefits have paradoxically deepened their impoverishment. These increases pushed the payments just over the limits which had previously allowed the recipients to qualify for other government programs such as Medicaid, which gives free hospital and medical care to the indigent.

Then there is the inequity that allows retired upper-income groups to collect interest from stocks and bonds and suffer no loss in Social Security benefits, since this is not considered earned income. Meanwhile, retired workers who can't exist on Social Security must continue to work to make ends meet. But for every dollar earned beyond $230 a month, the retirement check is reduced by 50 cents.

Medicare, too, which was tacked on to the system in 1967, is a cruel disappointment to the elderly who thought it would protect them from financially devastating medical and hospital bills. With government outlays for the program having jumped from $7.6 billion in 1971 to an estimated $15.6 billion for this year, the administration has vowed to cut costs. This means that the old are paying more and getting less. Providers of care, however, are exempt from the government's cost-cutting calculations. Consider the following:

—Elderly patients pay a deductible for the first sixty days of hospital care (this amount must come from their pockets before Medicare assumes the bill). When the program began it was $40 a day; now it is $104. And if the Ford provision (unveiled in his State of the Union message) is approved, besides the $104, the old will also pay 10 per cent of daily charges, up to a ceiling of $500. This feature, part of the President's plan for catastrophic illness, will cut deeply into their already meager incomes, extracting roughly another $150 to $200 for the average hospital stay of eleven days.

—Yearly medical insurance premiums for doctors' bills soared from $36 to the current $84 and will be upped to $86 this July. Despite the insurance, doctors are not required to accept the Medicare fee and can charge the patients directly if they like. And indeed they do, for while 60 per cent of the doctors in this country accepted the Medicare fee in 1970, only 40 per cent will take it now. This means that the elderly pay the doctors, bill Medicare and they, not the physicians, settle for the Medicare fee, which may be dramatically lower.

—The coinsurance that patients pay toward the hospital bill for the sixtieth through the ninetieth day of care

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jumped from $10 a day to $26.

—Services now covered, such as home visits by occupational and physical therapists and nurses, as well as many medical supplies, will no longer be paid for by Medicare, if the Ford package is enacted.

The method of financing Social Security through the payroll tax, though hailed as one of its most "egalitarian" aspects, since all Americans have to pay their own way, is actually one of its most regressive features. Many who are too poor to pay income tax nevertheless pay the full 5.8 per cent of their income to Social Security taxes. Also, the ceiling on taxable income (the amount over which income is not taxed) means that the poor and low-income groups are paying proportionately the most. It is currently set at $15,300, which means a single person making $35,000 a year pays exactly the same amount in taxes ($887) as one who earns $15,300 or a couple whose combined income comes to that amount. If the individual earning $35,000 paid the full 5.8 per cent, the Social Security tax would be $2,000 a year. But thanks to the ceiling, such an individual pays less than 3 per cent of his or her total income. To save the financially floundering system, Ford has suggested raising the payroll tax to 6.17 per cent, which will cut even more deeply into workers' pockets, but leave the inequities untouched.

Employer contributions are, in fact, another tax on workers, since they are passed on to employees in two ways. First, industries calculate their contributions into overhead costs, raise the price of their products, and the employees, as consumers, pay the higher tab. Second, employers would have workers believe that such fringe benefits have cut into profits and use this argument to resist wage demands.

Except for some government funding of the Medicare program, the Social Security system is totally self-supporting. Though critics urged from the start that there should be heavy or even total government financing, Roosevelt refused to tap general revenues. Today, the system remains intact, with conservatives still reciting the litany that pensions paid from general revenues would reduce Social Security to just another form of welfare and spoil workers' incentives to save and contribute to their old age. Such thinking is not only bad accounting but punitive (since low- and middle-income groups pay proportionately more than upper-income groups and clearly carry the burden of the nation's elderly). For what the original architects and current defenders fail to consider is the link between Social Security revenues, the economy and the outflow of benefits. Since the number of elderly drawing pensions is growing and the number of workers contributing to the system is falling (from a combination of lowered birth rates and high unemployment), Social Security revenues are down and will continue to fall as a high level of unemployment is maintained as a brake on inflation.

Thus, while Social Security payments for this year will be about $78 billion, only an estimated $72.3 billion will be collected. The difference will be taken from the trust fund that accumulated during the years when more workers contributed and fewer elderly drew benefits. It is obvious that such imbalances can't continue for long, since the reserve of $44.3 billion will eventually be depleted. What is debatable, however, is the cure for the dilemma.

Conservatives, like Ford and HEW Secretary F. David Mathews, stress that benefits must be cut in the name of fiscal responsibility, that taxes must rise and that the old must simply do with less. They reject outright the notion of government contributions or lifting the income ceiling to make payroll taxes more equitable.

Liberals recommend different strategies, but offer little in the way of real alternatives. Some suggest that Medicare be fully funded by the government and that a portion of the retirement and disability pensions be financed from general revenues. Also, they would close the loophole

Oliphant, The Denver Post

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which allows government employees to manipulate the system so as to receive two pensions: one from the pension plan they contribute to during their years of government employment; the other from Social Security, which they can obtain by working for the private sector after they retire from government for just long enough to get the full pension. Such reforms leave the regressive features of the system untouched.

What is obviously required but rarely proposed is a full restructuring of the system to make it truly equitable. This would involve restricting benefits to the wealthy who have handsome incomes from other sources. It would also imply financing it completely from general revenues, which draw on corporate, income and excise taxes. Such a scheme would distribute the cost of maintaining the nation's elderly over the entire population. And only such a plan would eliminate the glaring distortions that squeeze the incomes of the old, the poor and workers unmercifully, and finally provide the elderly the genuine security that was promised to them four decades ago. □

The Thin Edge of Retirement

ROBERT JOE STOUT

Walter Nelson spent the last twenty-three years of his work career in state employment as a school custodian. He retired at 65, hale, healthy and happy, his house paid for, his eyesight 20-20, his wife independent (and cranky) and his weekends scheduled with Friday night bowling and Saturday night dances. Between his pension and Social Security, he was able to put away $100 a month toward next year's vacations. His children, both married, had moved to urban centers to work. Walter and his wife traveled down to visit them one or two weeks a year and they brought the grandchildren north about that often to spend time in the small town.

It was the kind of retirement pictured in Sunday supplements. Perhaps the Nelsons made a mistake when they sold the house, which was large and costing money for repairs, and bought a mobile home on a site in pine-studded foothills 20 miles away. But both of their children endorsed the move; the mobile home was cozy, attractive, easy to clean; the view was pleasantly rustic, and there was a small shopping center a bit more than a mile away. Despite rising grocery and gas-station costs, they had enlarged their nest egg by the change and were among people their own age, many of whom had similar interests.

But then the trailer's hot-water heater exploded (they were away at the time) and damaged the structure so badly it had to be written off as a total loss by the insurance company. The insurance on their furniture did not come close to the cost of replacement. Only after he had been to several banks and lending institutions did Walter find out that, despite his good credit, he could not obtain a conventional home loan. He had no choice but to buy another mobile home and new furniture for it. This took most of the nest egg. Rising food and medicine prices (his wife's high blood pressure and a kidney ailment, his own iron deficiency anemia), plus car and maintenance expenses, utilities and auto insurance, ate into their pension and Social Security income. They dropped out of the bowling league and canceled or postponed vacations, even the trips to see their children.

Medicare, fortunately, paid 80 per cent of their doctors' bills and hospital costs, which increased after Walter's wife broke her hip falling from their front steps and he began to suffer from a nervous disorder. Their two children sent them money but, despite "good" jobs, both were over their heads with expenses and trapped in the suburban cycle of spending everything they earned in order to earn more. The second mobile home required constant repair. The septic tank ruptured and Walter had to replace it. Fuel bills tripled. Walter's nerve ailment, though sporadic, had become more intense and he and his wife decided they no longer could enjoy the isolation of the foothills and needed to be closer to a hospital.

A shortage of housing for rent had driven up prices in town. For the first time in Walter's life, he let bills go unpaid. He stood hunch-shouldered, his hands tucked beneath his shirt, as the living-room furniture was repossessed. He sold his car for half its bluebook value. Without consulting his doctor, he cut his own medicine dosages in half. He and his wife quit going out, quit seeing friends, quit writing letters and—resigned, apathetic—watched television from mid-morning until late at night. Their rent was more than a month overdue when they finally applied to the county for help.

As a young man in his late 20s, Walter had scrambled from job to job, town to town, pumping gas, mixing concrete for WPA bridges, digging graves, plucking chickens and cleaning out sewers. Now, for the second time in his life, the government was supporting him. For the first time, he was bitter about it.

"I've made lotsa mistakes in my life," he admits, "but always before, I could work my way outa 'em. Work—work hard, bust my back if need be.

"I thought I had ever'thing I wanted. But a man's pension don't go up when prices do. They jacked rents up on me. We either pay or get pushed inta the streets. Hell," he laughs coarsely, "these days there ain't even poor farms t'go to!"

Walter's plight is not untypical. When he began working, sugar cost 3 cents a pound, hamburger 9 cents a pound and a four-room house rented for $12 a month. At those prices, an hour's wages would buy 13 pounds of sugar or 4½ pounds of hamburger. A week's work paid the

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rent, the utilities, and filled the car's gas tank.

Ten years later, sugar was 5 cents a pound, hamburger 19 cents a pound and rent $28. But an hour's wages equaled 20 pounds of sugar and 5 pounds of hamburger. A week's earnings paid the rent with $12 a month left for utilities and time payments on furniture and clothes.

By the mid-1950s, Walter was getting $1.70 an hour. Hamburger cost 29 cents a pound and sugar 9 cents a pound. An hour's work was worth 5⅔ pounds of hamburger or 18 pounds of sugar. Rent (or its equivalent in payments and taxes) ran $55, or one week's wages, if you include utilities and a few home improvements.

When he retired, Walter was paying 59 cents a pound for hamburger (4½ pounds for an hour's work, the same as twenty-three years earlier) and 12 cents a pound for sugar (22 pounds for an hour). Housing took just over 20 per cent of his income.

The man now holding the job Walter had gets $3.40 an hour. Hamburger costs $1.19 a pound—2⅔ pounds per hour—and sugar has gone as high as 69 cents a pound—less than 5 pounds for an hour's wages. Rent for a house like the one Walter owned takes $240—or 43 per cent of the man's salary.

And 83 per cent of Walter's retirement payments plus Social Security!

A friend of Walter's—let's call her Cynthia—retired after fourteen years as an insurance company secretary (before that she had taught school). Her little financial reserve lasted only a year. She moved into an apartment complex on the understanding that she would qualify for low-rate government assistance but, under the Nixon-Ford administration, the help has not been forthcoming. Determined to get by, she took work as a motel maid. A year later, 66 years old, after forty-five years of contributing to society in demanding, responsible jobs, she collapsed from exhaustion and malnutrition. Broken and bitter, she hunches today in a rat-infested former Navy barracks, unable to work, alone, bitter and wondering how to justify it all. "Tell them not to get jobs," she has advised Walter to lecture his grandchildren; "they'll work all their lives and end up like us, sick and broke. Tell them it isn't worth it. Tell them to get on welfare now, while they still can enjoy each other."

And young enough to fight back. □

APATHY, POLLUTION AND CRIME

AMERICA'S LONG URBAN TURMOIL

CHARLES H. TROUT

How does the dreary litany go? Fall River, Sandusky, Kokomo? Ailing cities. Shrinking cities. The industrial base shrivels; unemployment soars; services deteriorate; crime increases.

Meanwhile, residents of most of our large metropolitan centers experience an even more chilling decline in the quality of their environment. Asthmatics fare poorly in the smog of Los Angeles; Washingtonians dodge muggers in the streets; New Yorkers watch their city sink into a fiscal abyss, while San Franciscans know that one day they may plummet into the San Andreas fault. Over the years, Americans have witnessed the creation of doughnut cities: there may be a hot time in the old suburbs tonight, but downtown, where proud central business districts used to be, there are silent, gaping holes.

People leave the cities whose deaths are lingering, the result of anything but benign neglect. No one quite has the decency to put them out of their misery, and Agnew's law—"If you've seen one slum, you've seen 'em all"—prevails. Urban dwellers, made cynical by a decline of amenities, accept for the most part quietly the truth that in the Buycentennial Year, no one is going to buy them much of anything.

A decade ago, city populations bargained through purposeful violence, or waited expectantly for the payoffs promised by the Great Society. Today the careworn residents, dulled by disappointments, slip into what social psychologists call "anomie." The capacity for outrage diminishes, and political alienation can be measured by the declining participation in municipal elections. The demise of protest politics, in turn, raises an obvious question. Can contemporary urbanites be expected to endure increasing discomforts indefinitely? Big city types have a reputation for being tough, nervy, resilient, full of bounce and pride. It may have been so once, but is it so still? Let us see.

In ancient times, city dwellers frequently did not have to ask about their future, for death tended to fall swiftly on errant metropolises. No glacial erosion of urban services in those days! Because of carnal wickedness, Sodom and Gomorrah were leveled by fire and brimstone "rained. . . from the Lord out of heaven." An earthquake, legend has it, pushed Atlantis under the sea. Vesuvius erupted, stopping Pompeii and Herculaneum in their tracks. Cato the Elder, not fond of destructive urban rivalry, pushed for the obliteration of Carthage. Into North Africa rolled the Roman legions. Carthaginians turned their temples into workshops; women gave their hair for bowstrings. After a bitter siege, Carthage fell. Not a building, in good repair or substandard, was left upright; the land was cursed. To symbolize the reduction of Carthage to open fields, the Roman plow was driven over the ruins. Like the residents of the lost and buried city of Persepolis, the denizens of Carthage, as well as those of other ancient citadels, were in no position to restore their cities, even had they wanted to

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bring about physical and spiritual renewal.

However, in somewhat more recent episodes of overnight urban catastrophe, city dwellers—ones not suddenly buried under lava—have risen Phoenix-like from the ashes. Indeed, Atlantans after General Sherman marched their way, Chicagoans after Mrs. Leary's incendiary cow, and San Franciscans after the 1906 earthquake all supply lessons from which today's city dwellers might derive inspiration. In those disaster-stricken places, an aroused citizenry mobilized as if for war. Residents hauled rubble, collected garbage, fought fires, formed *ad hoc* police squadrons—and assumed many of these tasks without charge. Black and white, immigrant and early settler, men and women momentarily forgot their differences, performed the labors of Hercules, and basked in civic pride as their cities were reshaped. Chicagoans, for example, who after the great conflagration of 1871 surveyed "mountains of brick and mortar, and forests of springing chimneys," soon were boasting that "the flames swept away forever the greater number of monstrous libels on artistic house building." During most of 1872, an amazed visitor noted, "There was built and completed in the burnt district of Chicago a brick, stone or iron warehouse every hour of every working day." "It is difficult to realize the fact," a Britisher observed a bit later, "that the busy thoroughfare through which we were passing, with its beautiful buildings constructed of immense blocks of marble, exquisitely chiseled, was but three years before a heap of charred ruins."

The smoldering ruin of urban decline does not, it seems, strike similar sparks of determination from its victims. Even so, it is unlikely that a disconsolate mayor today is going to take a torch to his city in the forlorn hope that his constituents will, like those feverishly energetic Chicagoans of the 1870s, rouse themselves from torpor. Even with the examples of Civil War Atlanta and post-earthquake San Francisco before him, no municipal executive will pray heaven to destroy his city in the wistful expectation that the lightning might pry loose funds from penurious state and federal governments, that citizens confronted by catastrophe might patch up their quarrels and put their shoulders to the civic wheel. The examples of Watts, Calif. and Chelsea, Mass., both of which suffered fiery fates within the last decade of so, ought to be sufficient to stay the hands of mayors intent upon arson. Of neither place could it be said, as was observed of post-fire Chicago: "Everything is rapid, everything is keen. There are hardly any idlers on the streets. Everyone has an object in immediate view—and is walking fast to reach it."

If mayors would be ill-advised to push the "destruct" button, could it be that ordinary citizens, when faced with overabundant unhappiness, might themselves perpetrate deeds sufficient to animate lethargic governments? History surely affords instances when city dwellers, made wretched by intolerable conditions, bestirred themselves without the stimuli of invading armies, earth-shattering quakes or fiery holocausts. The most spectacular cases where angry urbanites have accomplished awesome short-term results, it is true, have been European. Moreover, the most dramatic urban disturbances had something to do with injustices not exclusively confined to cities. Still, Abraham Beame and his counterparts might think about the aggrieved residents of Paris, circa 1785-95.

Appalled by prices which were advancing three times as fast as wages, victims of government which spent 75 per cent of its money on maintaining an army and discharging war debts, and unenthusiastic about starvation, Parisians of the 1780s turned to bread riots. When denied bread, they lashed out against speculators. When denied cake as well, they lopped off a few heads. Believing the old order to be corrupt and despotic, and miserable in the decaying tenements for which they paid exorbitant rents, Parisian *enragés* embraced Revolution with a capital "R." In 1792-93, insurgents distributed food, candles, soap and other commodities to those with proper credentials (food stamps, Paris style?). Estates were confiscated, and common citizens frolicked in parks which had been the exclusive preserves of the nobility. While the sons and daughters of the aristocracy were transported to the safety of faraway places, children of the working class paraded in the Jardin des Tuileries and watched the execution of Louis XVI at the Champs de Mars. Exclusive craft guilds were declared illegal, and all the trades were free for every citizen to enter.

Urban Americans, generally chary of extremism, may find this and other European models unappealing. Nevertheless, our own history has been punctuated by occasional acts of expressive violence growing out of a distinctly urban set of conditions. In 19th-century Philadelphia, Irish immigrants, fighting back against rampant nativism, resorted to direct attacks upon the Mayor and his citizen-posses. Railway workers in 1877, and again in 1894, acted out their discontents by burning car barns and uprooting track from Martinsburg to Pittsburgh to Chicago; the weapon of the general strike against intolerable hours and wages, usually occurring during periods of depression, has been applied in Chicago, Seattle, Minneapolis and elsewhere. Upset by soaring property levies, residents of Chicago in 1929 staged a taxpayers' strike which resulted in a cashless city. During the Great Depression, councils of the unemployed, marching under banners which read, "United We Eat, Divided We Starve," invaded the city halls of America. Eviction riots occurred in still other cities. In the 1960s, urban Negroes selectively looted the stores which they counted among their worst exploiters.

As Michael Wallace and Richard Hofstadter have pointed out, however, most episodes of American violence have been repressive, not expressive. Rather than directing wrath at government officials, discontented urbanites have turned upon convenient scapegoats. At an early stage, for example, certain urban areas became combat zones for socially accepted violence. White residents of Cincinnati in 1829 solved their racial problem when "some 200 or 300 of the lowest canaille" went on an anti-black rampage. When the violence had run its course, more than half the city's substantial population had fled. In the ensuing years, appalling episodes of anti-Negro violence were to break out north of Dixie: South Boston in 1976 is but the tip of a very large iceberg. Native Americans, concerned about competition for jobs, burned the Ursuline Convent in Boston and lugged cannons into Southwark, the Irish section of Philadelphia. Street-corner rumbles between

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immigrant groups eventually gave way to more serious ethnic struggles: in 1902, some 25,000 Jews passed through a New York Irish neighborhood behind the coffin of Chief Rabbi Jacob Joseph. When the funeral procession was attacked, the marchers retaliated, police moved in, and dozens were injured. Four years later the good people of Atlanta, ostensibly dismayed by the dives along Decatur and Peachtree Streets, acted in the name of moral reform by launching a reign of terror against blacks. During the zoot-suit riots of World War II, residents of Los Angeles found a convenient target in the city's Chicano neighborhoods. Informal vigilantism, often pitting have-nots against other have-nots, has habitually been substituted for action aimed at the sources of urban power.

Although more conventional political activism has also been resorted to in the past, in general the results have been disheartening. When New Yorkers discovered, among other things, that Boss Tweed had spent $175,000 on carpets, $7,500 on thermometers, and $400,000 on safes for a new county courthouse, they turned him out. A year later, voters restored Tammany to power. The nation's first tenement law was enacted in 1867; the growth of festering slums accelerated. As Melvin Holli has noted, progressive cosmeticians too often went to work on the structural aspects of municipal government; too few interested themselves in social reform. Municipal work forces, filled with dozing supernumeraries who owed their posts to the crassest forms of patronage, were trimmed to more efficient size during the 1930s, as a sop to beleaguered property owners. When the Great Depression ended, however, the jobs were restored—in spades. No concomitant improvement of services occurred; no greater responsiveness to citizens' desires was manifested. Much like Gogol's Akaki Akakievich, the humble Russian whose stolen overcoat led him on a futile goose chase through St. Petersburg's bureaucracy, the 20th-century urbanite has repeatedly encountered apathy, mediocrity, callousness.

If Americans have been reluctant extremists, and if it is pointed out that they have lacked models of successful citizen protest sustained over long periods of time, someone is bound to say that the nation's urban misery quotient has never been as high as that registered by, say, Parisians at the time of the French Revolution. Who knows? Misery, after all, is hard to calibrate. But while filthy streets and subways, polluted air, mini-Watergates, the friendly neighborhood junkie, the not-so-friendly neighborhood mugger, the run-down local P.S. 235, and the cop on the take do not produce widespread joy, neither do they send the misery quotient zooming off the charts. A full-scale revolt against the automobile in the city, against crushing taxes, against dog dung on the sidewalks is unlikely. Indeed, the American urbanite's capacity for discomfort is immense and has always been thus.

America's 17th-century city dwellers, with only murmurs of protest, accommodated themselves to robberies, prostitution, public displays of drunkenness, putrescent tanning pits which emitted noxious smells, and other "Grievous & Noisom" irritants. The inefficacy of citizen protest—indeed, the surprising infrequency of citizen uprisings—against misery-producing conditions during early American history was often to be repeated. To be sure, there were exceptions: in mid-19th-century Philadelphia, street gangs ran amok. In fact, the Philadelphia heavies, variously named "The Bouncers," "The Killers" and "The Rats," made the Sharks and Jets who pranced through *West Side Story* look like a feckless band of Fauntleroys. Respectable citizens clamored for a professional police force. Soon, they got one, and the "City of Brotherly Fear" became infinitely more peaceable. And in the Progressive era, self-anointed elites, distressed by immigrant politicians whose chicanery, according to Lincoln Steffens, represented "The Shame of the Cities," organized themselves into municipal reform associations. Private traction magnates, who owed their franchises to machine politicians, were replaced by public corporations. Municipal gas and electric departments were created; watchdog agencies in state legislatures were established; New Yorkers, tired of choking on the air emanating from Hoboken and other Garden State industrial cities, pushed for interstate controls; other cities pursued metropolitanization. But in the main, urban rebellions (almost never could they have been termed "revolts") have been rare. When they have occurred, they have been tempered by local habits, by historical legacies which have vitiated most of the bolder designs for urban change. The 1930s, when Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal entered the American city, is a case in point.

During the early years of the Great Depression, urban upkeep ground to a halt. Boston City Hall symbolized what was happening throughout the country: "Paint turned a grim brown; there was darkness, gloom and filth everywhere. The rich hangings in the Council Chambers were so dirty that you couldn't touch them without causing a dust storm." Men with self-inflicted wounds came to hospitals in search of three meals and a bed; women, covered with newspapers, slept on park benches. Residents of New Orleans peddled "Louisiana's golden oranges" supplied to the jobless at $2.70 a crate; in Boston, a city council member feared the day when there would be "on every corner men not selling apples but standing beside apples which they are trying to sell." Mass unemployment and plunging revenue collections forced cities to pare budgets and divert funds from public works to municipal welfare departments. Ill-housed, ill-fed, ill-clad and ill-served by government at every level, the army of unemployed turned to self-help cooperatives in places like Seattle and Dayton, to demonstrations in front of city halls, to May Day parades, to hunger marches. Apoplectic over the federal government's nonresponse, *The Nation* in August 1932 published one of the most scathing indictments of an American President ever to find its way onto the printed page, an article entitled "Is It to Be Murder, Mr. Hoover?" Voters answered "No!" and ushered Franklin D. Roosevelt to power.

Without question, the New Deal brought immense benefits to cities. For the first time, the national government entered the field of public housing. Work relief agencies furnished jobs to millions, and before the Works Progress Administration closed its doors, it had repaved thousands of miles of city streets, laid sewers, built hospitals, and repaired schools. Traffic moved more swiftly over bridges, through tunnels, and beneath underpasses

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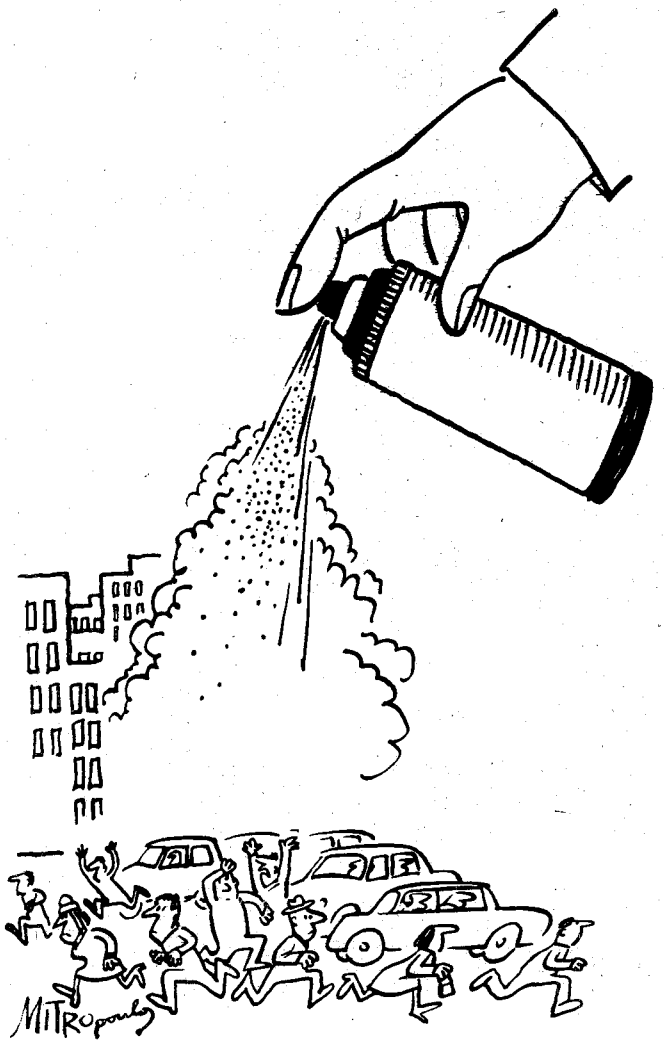
largely financed by Washington. Subway extensions, airport expansion, and a network of municipal parks were all part of the New Deal contribution. Under federal auspices, artists painted murals in public buildings, musicians performed in civic orchestras, and "opera on the dole" debuted in city after city.

In the wake of New Deal reform, the blue-collar classes provided glimpses of authentic radicalism: from the docks of San Francisco to the gates of Republic Steel, workers took to the streets in a quest for social justice. Thousands of municipal workers were unionized; the NAACP increased its membership tenfold, and its branches turned their attention away from a federal anti-lynch law to struggles against local discrimination. In many cities, as Edwin O'Connor observed in *The Last Hurrah*, Roosevelt's "celebrated impersonation of the Great White Father" had "put the skids" under urban bosses. "No need to depend on the boss for everything," one of the novel's characters recalled, for "the Federal Government was getting into the act. Otherwise known as social revolution."

But despite the important changes in intergovernmental relationships forged by New Dealers, there had been no social revolution. As Mark Gelfand observes in *A Nation of Cities*, "Roosevelt's pursuit of the urban vote may have turned national politics upside down, but it left the physical contours of the urban environment much the same." Roosevelt, argues Gelfand, catered to "the numerous interest groups that comprised the urban population. His program was urban only in the sense that it assisted people who lived in cities. . . ." The New Deal, adds Gelfand, "never came to grips with the city as an economic and social entity." Roosevelt's commitment to public housing was modest indeed; federal assistance to the urban jobless was always deemed a temporary expedient; public works projects were piecemeal and almost never reflected a planned, comprehensive attack upon urban blight; segregation of urban blacks increased; income was not redistributed; ambitious plans for the construction of spanking new cities were whittled down to three modest greenbelt communities.



When federal programs were installed in cities, they did not enter a vacuum. Rather, they encountered entrenched elites with encrusted habits. New Deal agencies quickly absorbed the traits of the cities into which they had come, and this localization of federal programs, in turn, blunted the Roosevelt administration's urban thrust. In Boston, for example, Green Power prevailed in local politics, the Irish receiving a shocking portion of federal jobs. Virtually all of the first 6,000 public-housing units were placed in Irish neighborhoods. The jobless in Cleveland, Fargo and New Orleans were indirectly punished when Roosevelt, impelled to discipline anti-New Deal Governors, for a time cut off or drastically reduced benefits. Real estate interests in Louisville and countless other places impeded federal housing when they moved in the courts against eminent domain proceedings. In order to reduce municipal taxes, Mayors diverted funds intended for the jobless to regular city projects; city councils, knowing that their constituents would not tolerate budget deficits, frequently scotched Public Works Administration projects because local treasuries were required to put up matching funds. By capturing control of work relief, urban bosses were often created, not destroyed, by the New Deal: Pittsburgh would serve as a case in point. Like Potemkin villages, the physical accomplishments of the New Deal sparkled, but behind the façades in city after city, familiar ideas and practices were solidly in place. Even in one of the nation's most traumatic decades, apostles of change chanced upon few converts.

In *World Of Our Fathers*, Irving Howe recalls a moment when Jewish women of New York's East Side, enraged by the price of kosher beef, staged a mini-revolt. The fracas "started on Monroe Street between Pike and Market, where Mrs. Edelson and Mrs. Levy—unremembered heroines of protest—refused to pay the new prices. Clashes occurred in front of butcher shops, a 'Ladies Anti-Beef Trust Association' was formed, immigrant housewives poured kerosene over meat, and, as the *Forward* wrote, 'hundreds of women, screaming and cursing the swindlers of the poor,' roamed through the streets."

However, isolated mini-revolts, no matter how courageous, have not transformed cities. Neither, for the most part, has the democratic faith in small, incremental change. Failing the reincarnation of Mrs. O'Leary's cow, today's cities will very likely continue to suffer citizen apathy, segmented reform, the persistence of self-interested bureaucracies and an exodus to the suburban crab-grass frontiers. □

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BOOKS & THE ARTS

Soothsayers, Faith Healers, Economists . . .

ECONOMISTS AT BAY: Why the Experts Will Never Solve Your Problems. *By Robert Lekachman. McGraw-Hill Book Co. 311 pp. $8.95.*

VICTOR LEBOW

One of the findings of anthropology is that in enterprises which involve risk the participants tend to be superstitious. The Romans depended upon their soothsayers to divine coming events from the entrails of pigeons. Today's politicians and business leaders rely on economists.

It is quite in keeping with the Delphic aura that surrounds economists that *The Wall Street Journal* story on Alan Greenspan should be headlined "President's Seer." The article hails him as the dominant White House adviser on economic policy. "Mr. Greenspan's conservative free-market views have strongly influenced the administration's election year approach to domestic affairs, with emphasis on nurturing a gradual economic recovery, limiting the growth of government and cutting taxes. Recently, Mr. Greenspan urged the President to veto a $6.2 billion public works bill, arguing that it would be a costly and inefficient way to create jobs. Earlier, he helped shoot down proposals by administration liberals for welfare reorganization and national health insurance."

This extract is pertinent to the book under review, for surely among the economists whom Professor Lekachman would be most anxious to "shoot down" is this very Alan Greenspan, chairman of the President's Council of Economic Advisers, and protégé of Ayn Rand.

This book is a sharp and unsparing indictment of today's conventional economists, leavened by the author's wit and his clarity in presenting his theses. We are saddled at present with that miserable octopod, Burns-Butz-Simon-Greenspan, whose feet are firmly planted in the free-competition postulates of Adam Smith, proud that since 1776 they have not learned anything nor forgotten anything. They have been the carriers of the Bourbonic plague which the Nixon-Ford administration has visited upon us.

Their wildly inaccurate forecasts, their stony decision to stem inflation by permitting unemployment, misery and desperation to mount to unconscionable levels, their inability to learn from the disasters of the past, make a grim recital which Robert Lekachman details and documents. As Distinguished Professor of Economics at Lehman College of the City University of New York, an authority on Keynes, and the author of outstanding works on inflation, welfare, and the history of economic ideas, Lekachman is one of the few economists in the United States today who has the knowledge, scope and courage to assail the economic "establishment."

His "value premise," to use Gunnar Myrdal's term, is that in a more responsible era he would expect politicians and economists to unite to provide vigorous stimulation of the depressed economy, calling for deep tax cuts, a program of public works to create jobs, aid to bankrupt cities, a vast extension of public housing, a healthy injection of funds to aid mass transit and the initiation of a program of comprehensive health care, together with a Family Assistance Plan much more generous than Nixon's. He would want full funding of the legislation for environmental protection. As he puts it, "A cure of inflation, consistent with high employment, requires the limitation of private discretion and the substitution of public for corporate discretion. In a society dominated by large corporations, the agents of inflation are, naturally, the men who run these corporations." But economists look upon controls on prices and profits of corporations as an invasion of those free markets which Adam Smith advocated. And as long as business helps get politicians elected, they are not inclined to vote for controls and risk defeat at the polls.

The author starts with a review of the past decade, from the escalation of the war in Vietnam by Johnson in mid-1965 to the on-again-off-again policies of Nixon leading to the disastrous decision to devalue the dollar and later to lift all controls. Economist Herbert Stein, another free-marketeer, detested controls, and it was inevitable that they would be dismantled under Phase III. Economist Butz, bosom pal of agribusiness, continued to restrict acreage, helping to raise the world prices for food and, with the Soviet grain deal, succeeded in ending the era of cheap food for Americans.

From his discussion of the sorry state of contemporary economics, Lekachman leads us into the problems of unemployment and poverty. He is convinced that "on present evidence, it is likely that long-run growth in the American economy will decline." But he believes that Americans are not going to face starvation or even a serious decline in their living standards in the foreseeable future. This, for the middle- and upper-income groups. But without a redistribution of income and wealth, he agrees with Gunnar Myrdal not only in the finding of structural unemployment but in the fact of a permanent underclass of unassimilated people, characteristic of underdeveloped countries and shameful for the richest nation on the globe.

In a bitter passage, in the course of which he demolishes the accuracy and validity of the Phillips curve (a statistical contrivance for proving a relationship between rises in wages and higher unemployment), Lekachman reveals the imputations of inferiority, indolence and dishonesty on the part of the poor. To his mind, the unstated case against full employment involves racism and class prejudice. After all, who will clean middle-class homes, wash restaurant dishes, mop floors, and generally do the dirty work? "For economists the moral is plain; they desperately need to rethink old assumptions, old certainties, and old emphases, not least in the treatment of work and unemployment." He stresses the miseries and the dangers attendant upon the huge unemployment rates of blacks, teenagers, women and minorities. It is only during major wars that democratic societies have engaged in successful redistribution of income (to a limited extent). The question is whether democracies can achieve this and, at the same time, face a permanent condition of slower growth and lowered expectations. Robert Heilbroner and others are convinced that only authoritarian governments are capable of making the hard choices involved.

In the meantime, the poor and the very rich pay a higher per cent of their

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incomes than do the rest of the taxpayers. Part of the problem of poverty Lekachman imputes to the power of big business. "Market concentration extracts monopoly profit from the unorganized customers. Present levels of profit contain as a routine feature an element of stockholder reward which free markets would not generate. Hence, by their own criteria, economists ought not to sanction this profit by casually accepting corporate pass-through of higher wages to prices paid by customers." But economists are inveterate institutional conservatives. They take for granted this political-economic-social system with all its inequities, and inevitably they ratify the doctrine that to curb inflation we must expect higher rates of unemployment. Only a relatively small group of the younger and more radical economists repudiate this doctrine.

For the Greenspan-Simon-Ford cabal, the poor are to blame for their poverty. But their own figures show that the richest Americans, just 1 per cent of the total population, own more than eight times the assets of the bottom 50 per cent. What is more, for all the prattling about "our" affluence, this general relationship has existed for practically the whole 200 years of our nationhood.

Were we to institute full employment with guarantees of jobs on an adequate scale, it would demand great and painful readjustments in public attitudes and in political priorities. To face the possibility of reducing present economic inequalities would require some degree of "interference" in the labor market, and "a legal right to some kind of job." The results would involve reshaping social attitudes, since with the reduction in inequality of incomes, the young, the blacks, the women would not only become regular recipients of wages but as unemployment declines they would be seized with the incentive to seek training and advancement—facing a future of hope. Poverty would disappear. Lekachman discusses both the pleasant and the difficult issues such a policy presents. But the very idea of full employment is anathema to business, and probably also to a majority of the members of the House and Senate.

While our record of unemployment since the end of World War II has been the worst of all the important industrial societies, our economists are, most of them, not especially concerned. Lekachman tells us that their interests center on capital theory, monetary models, new economic history, sources and uses of microdata, etc. As the brilliant British economist, Joan Robinson, said in a recent lecture, "American economists who sing hymns to the system are not doing their job." As for those who call themselves Keynesians, they have absorbed only part of Keynes's message, the part about deficit spending. "They have ignored Keynes's brooding worry about the instability of capitalism and the 'anarchy of unplanned growth.' " Lekachman, who criticizes the current addiction to models and abstruse mathematical formulas as substitutes for grappling with the real problems of the world today, must have enjoyed Joan Robinson's comment on these exercises. "I don't know math," she declared, "so I am obliged to think."

Lekachman sees the training of economists as transforming them into conservative social scientists. Thus, they come to fear any tinkering which will upset the delicate equilibrium, any human interference with the "automatic" workings of the market. As a result of this kind of professional training, we saw a whole battalion of liberal Democratic economists join their conservative confreres in welcoming the extinction of Nixon's uneasy experiment with wage and price control.

To this reviewer, what is particularly galling in the mountains of statistics economists produce and study is the fact that their principal utility is for application to business problems and business decisions. True, they cannot quantify misery, depressing housing, alienation, undernourishment, or the hopelessness of the millions trapped in poverty, illiteracy and lack of skills. But, as Lekachman observes, they juggle the figures of the Gross National Product with no thought as to how and where that product is distributed. And in the course of his discussion of this sacrosanct GNP, he debunks both its significance and its utility. The "neutrality" which economists maintain leads to no expression of judgment as to whether an increase in the GNP which is directed to the benefit of the top 5 per cent of income recipients is better or worse than the same dollars going to increase the incomes of the bottom 5 per cent of the population. His telling example: $1 million to J. Paul Getty is for establishment economists the equivalent of the same amount distributed among 10,000 welfare families in the South Bronx—a disaster area in New York City. The GNP remains unmoved, and so do the economists. Nor does GNP measure a net loss or gain in the national income estimates. "In sum, the national income measures, crown jewels of economic statistics, are almost trivial indicators of anything worth measuring. Are we suffering more than we used to from such negative externalities as fouled streams, dirty air, earsplitting noise, and crowded highways? No way to tell from the official numbers. Is our distribution of income and wealth 'better' or 'worse' this year than last? What, responds the expert, do you mean by better or worse?" As Lekachman puts it, GNP lumps together goods and evils, so long as price tags happen to be attached to items. The social costs of private enterprise—the externalities, in economic jargon—are never taken seriously into account: pollution, for example. It would have been useful if the author had applied his analytic and critical skills to the woefully inadequate figures we are spoon-fed on the most pressing national problem of all—unemployment.

Lekachman accuses economists of entertaining the most naive ideas as to how property is created or how profits are best maximized. They take property for granted in all its forms since, to them, it is a subject that merits no separate discussion. It appears, further, that there are few works on the institution of property. It is therefore no wonder that for an understanding of the origins and the effects of property we must look to radicals like Karl Marx and Thorstein Veblen.

He asks, "Does anybody but economists really love competition and free markets?" He proceeds to demonstrate how the *a priori* assumption of competition distorts economic thinking, especially since the concepts of free markets and unchecked competition were not fully realized even in Adam Smith's day—and certainly bear little resemblance to the realities of the present day. For most people in the capitalist democracies, he argues, it is far more preferable to increase their benefits than to expand markets. In the current depression his contention is upheld by the gains which have cushioned its effects on retired persons through the Social Security payments, inadequate though they be, and, for those who are eligible, through unemployment insurance, food stamps and, of course, in the last resort, welfare with its humiliating means test. For Lekachman, these signs of progress should be the incentive to work for greater gains, for guarantees of jobs, and for adequate incomes for those who are unable to work or unqualified to get a job. "This is to say that economists and other social scientists who surrender their neutrality to pursue explicit goals of social equity are far more likely to enjoy a measure of success by pursuing legal and political tactics than by indulging fantasies of universal free markets, particularly . . . when there are

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so few free markets visible to the untrained eye."

A word of explanation may be in order regarding this "neutrality" which Lekachman decries. It has long been an ambition of the social sciences to achieve the analytical rigor and precision of the physical sciences. And a scientist in those realms is expected to have no emotional or ideological commitment to his data or his findings. It is this neutrality which the economists espouse, but for them it is a comfortable escape from the human consequences of their counsel.

In no area is neutrality more useful to economists than in that of corporate enterprise, but it serves as well to divert academic economists from analysis and study of corporations and of their gargantuan multinational excrescences. We know less than we should about the machinations of these global operators partly because most economists refrain from exploring the tangled webs of power, corruption and deceit which they have spun in secrecy. Now, from hearings before Congressional committees, and from the work of a few journalists and scholars, we are beginning to get an inkling of their enormous power. As the author says, "Even from the economist's standpoint, complacency is probably a mistake, for the conglomerates play mysterious pricing games which cast into serious doubt the technical efficiency of their operations. The financial object of their game is to shift as much profit as possible away from high-tax jurisdictions toward low-tax countries. . . . There are more forms of competition than those hailed by economists, and the multinationals are adept players in political games among the fifty states of the nation and the hundreds of separate polities of the world." There is no general theory of oligopoly and no full explanation of how multinationals achieve their aims. Nor have economists tried to study the effects of the geographical mobility of the global corporations on domestic employment and growth. Lekachman adds: ". . . the large corporation, the key institution of contemporary market capitalism, is an apparition never fully materialized by conventional economics . . . worse still, it tends to be explained in excessively simple terms." And no one tries to determine whether or not oligopolies and monopolies further enlarge the inequities of wealth and income distribution.

His indictment goes further. Economists do not examine the effects of the power exercised by labor unions, government agencies or major corporations which function all too often as private governments. "Whether or not economists follow the trail of power, large corporations almost routinely take the sort of action which political theory assigns to legitimate public authority and democratically elected legislatures." As for the doctoral student in economics, he finds it difficult to gather much information about any corporation, for they all tend to hold their secrets close to their vests. So, to get his degree, "The trick is to apply an arcane mathematical method to a small problem or available body of data, manipulate the information elegantly in a computer, and defend the results to an approving dissertation committee whose members are also eager to speed their students on paths of professional glory. . . . Ignorance of the real world is more than bliss; it is very nearly a prerequisite to a successful career in conventional economics."

As for unions, economists have found them an annoyance for almost two centuries. They have a built-in bias against them. Why? "As economic institutions, unions are harmful to the fantasies of pure competition. . . . As political organizations they are perceived as disruptive of the established order." Nor are economists open to the social and political aims of the labor movement. But the fact is "that no other important interest group, aside from the unions, persistently stresses in its own media and the speeches of its leaders issues of economic justice, redistribution, enlargement of the public sector, universal health care, adequate public housing, and the close connection between these issues and jobs for members—any union's overriding priority." Lekachman does not venture here into such troublesome areas as the widespread corruption of the labor movement, and the total absence from our political scene of any genuine opposition.

He finds it sad as well that economists still exaggerate the role of competitive markets, and pay so little attention to the "impersonal" decisions which these markets make as to "who is to get what, who is to live in Beverly Hills and who in Watts."

His chapter on the "Four Visionaries" is a highly condensed introduction to the thinking of Adam Smith, Karl Marx, Thorstein Veblen and John Maynard Keynes. He believes present-day economists have more to learn from them than from most of our economic writers, for economics "whatever once may have been its congruence to the realities of capitalism, now is outmoded by changes in behavior, economic institutions, and power relationships within domestic boundaries and among nations."

Writing about Adam Smith, he remarks on his compassion for the poor and oppressed at a time when the conventional mercantilism actually favored poverty. Noteworthy, too, was his suspicion of business morality and his disapproval of monopolies and conspiracies to raise prices, as well as his insistence that it was the interests of the consumer that were paramount.

His special comment on Karl Marx concerns the sharp differences between the approach of conventional economics and that of Marx's Marxism (which is something quite different from Marxism-Leninism). "Marxism, the greatest of the intellectual fighting faiths, seems more and more relevant to the struggles over the world's resources which have already broken out, and the internal conflicts

SAVING BINGE

I am on one again
wandering the raw pastures of Upstate
in want of redness

Gathering the last apples
the flaming rose hips
that hang from poor tatters of tree and bush

What am I doing
but practicing my lover's advice

He said
I would enjoy India
if my travels were somehow directed

If for instance I searched
all over that curious continent
for blue buttons and cold spice

Susan Baumann

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between capital and labor. . . . Marxism may not be the best explanation of these large events, but its critics would be in a stronger position if they could offer any explanation of the disorders of capitalist economies even approximately as plausible."

Thorstein Veblen he sees as the closest approximation to the Marxist strain of the radical criticism of capitalism among American social scientists. Veblen considered the interests of business contrary to those of the engineers, technicians and laborers, and saw the business cycle itself as a natural consequence of business enterprise. His *Theory of Business Enterprise*, for all its eccentricities of language, embodies remarkable insight into the American corporation and its picaresque leadership.

John Maynard Keynes, of course, has had the most direct influence on American economic policies, first because of the adoption of his theories in order to fight the depression of the 1930s but also because of the continuing sniping at those theories that is the hallmark of this administration and provides a *bête noire* for Milton Friedman and the "Chicago School." Joan Robinson calls Keynes's American disciples "Bastard Keynesians" because they have accepted only part of his message.

But all is not lost for economists, for they can still "recover Veblen's fruitful distinction between technology and business, Marx's powerful analysis of capitalist development, Keynes's alliance of full employment and diffusion of civilized pleasure, even Adam Smith's hope of public benefit from genuinely competitive markets." As it stands now, without recourse to morality or history, economics is concerned with techniques which may be useful to business, but offer no guide to social policy beyond "the ruminations of accountants, lawyers and philosophers of advertising, marketing, and public relations." It must outgrow the unpardonable naïveté with which economists look upon unions, or the brainwashing of the consumer by advertising, or the power of the giant corporations which dominate our world and not only shape but corrupt our future.

Ensconced in their corporate cubbyhole, the business economists find it comfortable to adopt their employers' views. And their forecasts "have in recent times been strikingly wrong. . . . Economists who think small thoughts condemn themselves to be intellectual hirelings, instruments of other people's purposes." Contemporary society must face up to the necessity of achieving distributive justice in a "time of diminished growth."

Economists will be required for the development of plans for full employment as a matter of national policy and for the democratic planning to which this country must resort if it is to survive the threats of militarization and totalitarianism which hang over the world today.

Professor Lekachman has written an important book. Moreover, with it he is performing an essential public service, for as he says, "The excuse for perpetrating an entire volume about . . . [the economists'] shortcomings is only this: when respectable economists are wrong *en masse*, other people usually suffer the consequences." He may not convert the establishment economists, but his book will be of value to the thinking public, to open-minded politicians, and to the social sciences generally. I admire it for the "meat" he has packed into it, for the prophetic anger which pervades it, and for the enlightened vision he presents to Americans. □

A Literary Psychology

A PSYCHOLOGICAL APPROACH TO FICTION: Studies in Thackeray, Stendhal, George Eliot, Dostoevsky, and Conrad. *By Bernard J. Paris. Indiana University Press. 320 pp. $12.50.*

JUDAH STAMPFER

> I have . . . seen that Horneyan theory has wide applicability to literature. Though her psychology (like any other) is far from providing a complete picture of human nature, Karen Horney deals astutely with the same patterns of intrapsychic and interpersonal behavior that form the matter (and often the structure) of a good many novels and plays. The five novels to be discussed here were chosen not only because they are all helpfully illuminated by Horneyan psychology but also because they offer an interesting variety of personality types, of modes of characterization, and of narrative technique.

Bernard Paris here acknowledges that his subject matter and technique in approaching it have undefined borders. There are novels and plays for which his approach is of little use; there are also psychological approaches other than his own that might have equal or greater significance. Within these limitations, in his first chapter, "The Use of Psychology: Characters and Implied Authors," he defends psychology itself as a fundamental way of understanding fiction, alongside aesthetic or thematic approaches. In his second chapter, "The Psychology Used: Horney, Maslow and the Third Force," he explains the psychological approach that he uses sufficiently to make the technique available to the reader as a tool of literary analysis. He applies the technique in successive chapters to *Vanity Fair*, *The Red and the Black*, *The Mill on the Floss*, *Notes from the Underground* and *Lord Jim*. In a concluding chapter, he summarizes the powers and limitations of his approach.

Since I am less satisfied than Paris with the psychological approach of Horney and Maslow, it is all the more necessary to spell out the virtues of this book. Paris is, for a layman, a very good psychologist. His explanation of Third Force psychology is lucid and thorough, putting emphasis on the emerging experience of the adult, as he successfully outgrows earlier stages of psychic starvation. He shows the range of the usefulness of this approach to the study of fiction without oversimplifying the subject. Then he practices what he preaches, offering cogent psychological explanations for apparent dilemmas and contradictions in these novels. Given the current decline in fiction, with the trend toward musical themes, sociological tracts, raw reportage, farce as an end in itself, and artful exercises for their own sake, it is helpful to have a demonstration of the richness of 19th-century fiction as examined from the standpoint of a fuller psychological understanding. Whatever else a novel is, if it is not psychological it is nothing.

Judah Stampfer is a novelist and critic. He is now at work on a book entitled A Landscape of American Literary Taste.

LOVING

There is a tiny wind in our room
where the fan hums.
It moves the hands of the clock
like the fine hairs on your back
in every direction.
We are going nowhere.

All day we swam in the sea
to learn how water
lifts us from our lives,
waves that we keep repeating.

Wherever we are,
there are things we can count on.
When I wake before dawn
the room is already light.

Shirley Kaufman

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Paris also offers a useful critical tool, when he advances the theory of self-actualization as a way of understanding the process of a plot. The novel itself becomes a demonstration of the turbulent ambivalence of the neurotic personality of our time, as it arrives at equilibrium or death in the closing action of the novel. Third Force psychology offers a useful paradigm for many novels of social realism—as the Oedipus complex does of youth and coming of age. Such psychological ways of understanding plots, as well as characters, are a most constructive answer to the fashionable contempt for plot as being naive and obsolete. However shopworn current novels may seem, the abandonment of plot is an impoverishment that must be justified in every case.

Having acknowledged the helpfulness of this book, however, I ought to define more fully its specialized psychological approach. Firstly, the Horney view (Paris himself points out its affinities with Erich Fromm and Carl Rogers) belongs to a revisionist, second-generation psychoanalytic era, one that is interested in patterns of conflict and ambivalence, rather than in basic energies. In such material, the term neurosis figures larger than the term libido. Sexuality and hate as raw forces receive less attention than the social dance they generate. As I recall it, Fromm said in a lecture that sexuality was the prime reference in Freudian psychology because of the sexual repression of the Viennese society in which Freud grew up. In our society, which has a different morality, other modes of reference, he feels, might become primary. Herbert Marcuse, on the other hand, has attacked the revisionist trend in analytic theory. The disagreement on libido process is too basic to be ignored.

Typically, for the revisionist position, Paris defines anxiety as a social maladjustment: "Basic anxiety is a 'profound insecurity and vague apprehensiveness' which is generated by feelings of isolation, helplessness, fear, and hostility." The term "basic anxiety" sounds like Harry Stack Sullivan's concept of a raw disruption or shaking of the psyche, that the infant absorbs by osmosis from tensions in the mother's body while she holds him. It is not generated by "feeling" but by a magnetic seizure, skin to skin and anxiety to anxiety. For Sullivan, basic anxiety or the inclination to hysteria is meaningless and without symbolic content. It can be alleviated; it can never be healed.

Such observations do not negate Paris's book—it is too useful and intelligent for that—but they point out the slant that it takes in dealing with the novels he discusses. These include the depiction of raw states, preoccupations that suggest other colorations in human psychology—nausea and hysteria in *Notes from the Underground*, a death wish in *Lord Jim*, the workings of the anima in *Vanity Fair*. And it is noteworthy that using a Freudian paradigm, Norman O. Brown has explored the Oedipal plot pattern in an arresting number of works, spawning a long period from ancient to modern times.

My concern is not simply a matter of suggesting that other psychological modes are available in analyzing literature—Paris freely acknowledges that. It is that the term mimesis is an inadequate contrast to the thematics as a way of going at literature. It presumes that a writer of fiction imitates human beings when he writes; as critics once insisted that Shakespeare imitated Nature. My own feeling is that this never happens. The writer makes observations and absorbs data in a set or psychological pattern as he renders it on paper. The action he delivers is partially cooked; it is never raw. And the psychology he uses in all likelihood is one that he got from other writers or from the psychology of his time. The fact that some novels respond to Paris's methods more than others only proves that some authors believed in something assimilable to Third Force psychology when they began writing. It is therefore necessary to postulate something called "literary psychology" as an alternative to or a refinement of mimesis: the psychology that authors naturally employ when they write imaginative literature—as opposed to "human psychology," the system of thoughts employed by psychologists when they approach human beings. The relationship between human psychology and literary psychology is a subtle and complex one, that critics generally gloss over in their interest in mimesis.

Among available psychologies, Third Force psychology is at its strongest in discussing the ambivalence and complexity of carefully delineated individuals. By the time an urbane human being reaches maturity, his raw states are largely a literary fiction anyway. But a psychology more attuned to lower strata of the unconscious, such as that of Jung, can get closer to the psychology of reading: what the reader identifies himself with as he enjoys a novel. The reading of fiction offers not only a mimetic pleasure, in the close approximation of reality, but also a vicarious pleasure, in joining one's psyche in imagination with the psychic energies unfolded in the novel. The experience of catharsis in-

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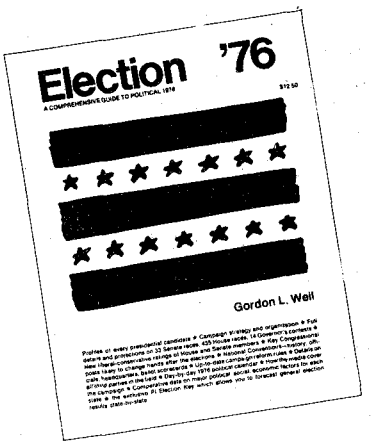

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volves something that neither mimesis nor thematic processes can explain.

Paris's book is therefore a trenchant study of psychological patterns in the novels of his choice. I believe that his method is of much less value in approaching works like Shakespeare's plays. Third Force psychology, the psychology of self-actualizing individuals, is an exceedingly personal theory, appropriate to a rising middle class, broadly the period of the novels Paris chose to discuss. The components of the real self, as Paris quotes from Maslow, "are potentialities, not final actualizations. They are actualized, shaped or stifled, mostly (but not altogether) by extra-psychic determinants (culture, family, environment, learning, etc.)." Family and culture are thus lumped together as extraneous to the organism of the psyche. (The concept of "bond" developed in King Lear would suggest that Shakespeare thought otherwise, at least in that play.) Presumably providence and nature are lumped together in the etcetera at the end. (Dante and Wordsworth would demur.) Paris's discussion is nevertheless a valuable one. I wish his approach exhausted the subject; but my own sense of human nature suggests the activity of deeper and more somber psychological processes that his critical method is unable to handle. □

Disciplining the Tower of Babel

REFLECTIONS ON LANGUAGE. *By Noam Chomsky. Pantheon Books. 269 pp. $10. Paper $3.95.*

EDWARD MARCOTTE

To what extent mind is its own source of pre-existing knowledge is one of the perennial questions. And while theories of the mind are often classified by the stock models of rationalism and empiricism, it isn't difficult to see that both their respective leading ideas, innateness and the *tabula rasa*, cancel in absurdity when pushed too far. A mind possessing all knowledge innately would be superhuman, while a *tabula rasa* in the fullest sense couldn't possibly belong to an entity that reacted to events in any patterned way, since that itself would constitute evidence of something innate. The task, then, is to determine the line of interaction between these two extremes; the result is a theory of cognition, and the philosopher or scientist is described as a rationalist or empiricist according to the value he assigns to cognition in his concept of mind and experience.

Around these themes successive maps have been drawn, discarded, retraced since Descartes, or even before. A school or an entire period may lean one way or the other. Now, for example, empiricism's dominance is being challenged. The structuralism of Lévi-Strauss, Piaget and others, Michel Foucault's "archaeology of knowledge," Thomas Kuhn's theory of "paradigms" are, in their different ways, anti-empiricist, stressing the role of human conceptualizing activities in ordering facts, behavior and knowledge.

It is well known that Noam Chomsky embraces the rationalist cause, even to the extent of having written a book called *Cartesian Linguistics: A Chapter in the History of Rationalist Thought*. He is quick, though, to point out his divergence from classical rationalism, mainly in attributing a biological basis to innate mental structures. Rationalism versus empiricism is a question seen by Chomsky as important not only theoretically but also in a humanistic and political sense. Chomsky describes empiricist doctrine as "an insurmountable barrier to fruitful inquiry, much as the religious dogmas of an earlier period stood in the way of the natural sciences." The overall legacy of empiricism has been a demeaning view of human nature.

The three chapters comprising Part I of *Reflections on Language* have been reworked from lectures given at McMaster University in January of 1975. Part II is a revised version of material contributed by Chomsky to a volume of essays in honor of Yehoshua Bar-Hillel. These reflections are, as Chomsky promises at the outset, not too technical for the most part, but since everything hinges on his more abstract theory of generative grammar, some acquaintance with the background is useful.

Chomsky's theory is that a universal grammar, common to the human race, determines particular grammars, each of which have the capacity of generating an infinite number of individual sentences in their respective languages. "Let us define 'universal grammar' (UG) as the system of principles, conditions, and rules that are elements or properties of all human languages not merely by accident but by necessity—of course, I mean biological, not logical necessity." UG works in coordination with other cognitive structures besides the language faculty per se. Thus there is nothing simple in so elementary an act as naming an object: applying a name takes place within a framework of common sense assumptions by which things are categorized into types, as units, as having spatio-temporal contiguity, etc. Here Chomsky brushes shoulders with Piaget. It is this other side of cognition, having to do with our concepts of space, time and physical objects that Piaget has investigated. Parallels are obvious between Chomsky and other structuralists. Although Chomsky repeatedly suggests that UG is one component of the cognitive system, he makes little mention of researchers who have attempted to describe other segments of this system. Lévi-Strauss is another example. His researches into the structures inherent in myth, in human society and interaction complement both Chomsky's and Piaget's work.

The question whether human linguistic activity does embody the regularities Chomsky attributes to it is empirical, to be settled by scientific research. Thus the conflict Chomsky delineates isn't only a matter of rationalism versus empiricism but of philosophy's claim to a say on matters traditionally within its domain. Chomsky has divested rationalism of its philosophic status, since the cognitive structures he claims to have discovered are not postulated by reason and insight alone, as are, for example, Kant's categories. The outcome doesn't supplement philosophy with linguistic research but rather assimilates part of philosophy to linguistics. This has indeed been philosophy's historical fate, spawning the sciences, one by one, as developments of technique and knowledge led to the increasing organization of procedures, allowing physics, astronomy, psychology, biology, etc., their autonomy.

Far from offering a speculative theory, Chomsky sees "no reason why cognitive structures should not be investigated rather in the way that physical organs are studied." A genetic basis, he suggests, will someday be discovered for the structures underlying human linguistic competence.

In this new book Chomsky is extra careful not only to emphasize the empirical character of his investigations but also to distinguish his own approach

Edward Marcotte has contributed essays and reviews to Partisan Review, Chicago Review *and* The Nation.

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from various other theories of the mind and language—empiricism, behaviorism and views of various linguistic philosophers. Many pages are devoted to taking on such adversaries as Quine, John Searle, H. Paul Grice, and P.F. Strawson, all of whom have either presented counter theories or have disputed points in Chomsky's theory.

With unconcealed contempt for "philosophizing," he addresses the longest section of *Reflections on Language* to "Problems and Mysteries." It is typical of his scientific orientation that he defines a "problem" as something "within the reach of approaches and concepts that are moderately well understood," while "mysteries" concern issues that are "just as obscure today as when they were originally formulated. . . ." Such a distinction offers good insight into the difference between science and philosophy. A philosopher tackles mysteries as well as problems; these mysteries in turn may be banished from consideration, in the way that the logical positivists dismissed metaphysical questions, Kant eliminated metaphysical and cosmological dilemmas such as the beginning and extent of the universe, and Wittgenstein "dissolved" the pseudo-questions arising from grammatical befuddlement. But at the outset the philosopher endeavors to confront mysteries and pursue them to their ends, not set them aside as the scientist must do—until techniques are more advanced, or else forever in the case of mysteries by nature not amenable to scientific consideration.

Since universal grammar comprises structures and operations not ordinarily accessible to consciousness, we are seemingly faced either with accepting the notion of unconscious knowledge or opting for an operational concept of mind. The question arises as to the sense in which a user of a language can be said to "know" universal grammar. Chomsky, impatient with terminological disputes, is quick to lay aside the word know if it proves puzzling, suggesting "cognize" instead.

But does this eliminate the difficulty? What is required for linguist *C* to stipulate UG? The ability to abstract a finite system of regularities from all of human language? But is it more than a formalism that we thenceforth speak of cognitive structures? Shouldn't we withhold inference and say only that UG is identified *with the fact* that human languages share certain structural peculiarities? The question has numerous analogues in the history of philosophy, from the postulation of "real" entities on the atomic and subatomic levels of matter to the reality of "mind" itself. One natural way out is the operational approach. But Chomsky, in his fixation on the substantive, seems to consider the unconscious less objectionable, pending discovery of the genetic link which he believes must exist. It may, of course, be incorrigibly metaphysical, this question of the ultimate epistemological status of UG; in Chomsky's eyes it is trivial, a mystery—thus his exasperation when Robert Schwartz or others persist in treating it as a real issue.

A rationalist in his hypothesis but an inveterate empiricist in methodology, Chomsky is anxious to locate his theory of grammar on firm scientific ground. Since the gene and the mental structure are leading models orienting current scientific research, it shouldn't seem surprising when Chomsky projects the assimilation of one to the other. Genetics might in fact be characterized as the structuralism of biological science: and in both the theorist is operating with similar presuppositions concerning explanation and relevance. Explaining the world is equated with delineating its internal system of regularities. This is, of course, what science has always sought to do, but only recently have we possessed viable models for the phenomena applying to genetics and cognition respectively.

Yet it may not be correct to say that Chomsky isn't a philosopher and isn't concerned with philosophical issues. What started as purely linguistic research (*Syntactic Structures*) has led, through involvement in political causes and an identification with an older philosophic tradition, to no less than an attempt to formulate an overall theory of man. The roots of this are manifest in the linguistic theory. Or so it would seem. The discovery of cognitive structures common to the human race but only to humans (species specific), leads quite easily to thinking of unalienable human attributes.

But granted the existence of "uniform cognitive structures that are vastly underdetermined by triggering experience," what are we allowed to infer about human nature? In arguing against a view of man as lacking a definitive nature, Chomsky tries to marshal his linguistic theory in the service of a political and worldly cause. "If people are, in fact, malleable and plastic beings with no essential psychological nature, then why should they not be controlled and coerced by those who claim authority, special knowledge, and a unique insight into what is best for those less enlightened?"

The problem is, how is universal grammar supposed to guarantee our ultimate immunity from manipulation? Just because a would-be dictator cannot lead us outside grammar, does this prohibit him from controlling our minds in other areas? Even more sinister, how can we be sure we're not genetically programmed to submit to coercion, and to assume the roles of dictators and slaves? That isn't so far-fetched. Edward Wilson, a Harvard zoologist, in suggesting recently that genes may have a bearing on emotions like love and hate, joins a number of scientists making comparable claims about the influence of genes on behavior.

All attempts to ground moral attitudes on abstract principles and theories should perhaps be met with automatic skepticism. Humanism can be found among rationalists and empiricists of all shades, and is compatible with any system of metaphysics or scientific theory —but so are its opposites, oppression and ruthless disregard for people. Thus however one agrees with and respects Chomsky's political attitude, it seems doubtful that linguistics can tell us any ulterior nontrivial truths about the human spirit or man's essence. To see universal grammar as *inspirational* to political humanism is another matter, for the two are not, after all, incompatible either.

The designation "Reflections," is somewhat misleading in view of the amount of space Chomsky devotes to answering his opponents on finer points of theory. Thus the first chapter, "On Cognitive Capacity," will be interesting

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and accessible to the more general reader, while long stretches of the last part might be appreciated only by someone knowledgeable in the field. Being of such mixed interest, *Reflections on Language* may not be the best non-technical introduction to Chomsky's linguistic ideas (*Language and Mind* might be more suitable), though it is sure to fascinate the reader already familiar with some of the issues under debate. The replies to Quine, Searle, Grice, *et al.* are valuable in their clarification of typical problems of interpretation which Chomsky's brand of rationalism gives rise to.

Any new theory manifests itself within a background of conceptual habits, prejudices and conventions, out of which it defines and extricates itself. Chomsky's frequent impatience with critics who persist in making irrelevant objections is perhaps forgivable, though it makes one wonder if the attempt to achieve mutual understanding is not in the end a futile enterprise. □

MUSIC

DAVID HAMILTON

Some seven years ago, I berated the Metropolitan Opera for a particular cut in Wagner's *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*. It was Sachs's speech, "*Hat man mit dem Schuhwerk*," in the first scene of the third act, and the omission, I said, was "like playing Act III, Scene 3 of *Hamlet* minus the 'Now I might do it' speech." A few years later, at the next revival of the work (conducted by Thomas Schippers), to my entire astonishment, this passage was heard from a New York stage for the first time in several decades, with immense gain to the character of Sachs and to the dramatic situation on stage. Last fall, in the New York City Opera production, Julius Rudel offered half of the passage in question; this spring, at the Met, Sixten Ehrling's recension of the work discards it once again, along with half of Sachs's first speech to the populace in the final scene and virtually all of his peroration on the virtues of German art.

This leaves Thomas Stewart, the Met's Sachs, very little to work with, as a person or even merely as a presence, in the opera's most critical scenes. It was particularly disappointing because by that point in the performance Stewart seemed to be in full command of his resources, ready to fill out tonally what had already been an interestingly original conception—more of a "character" than the usual blandly beneficent father figure. With capable work from Arlene Saunders (Eva), Jean Cox (an uncommonly presentable Walther), Günther Leib (Beckmesser), and John Macurdy (after a weak start, an impressive Pogner), this has the makings of a strong performance. When it returns in the fall, perhaps the orchestra will have worked its way back into the score some more; at this season's third performance, there was much rough playing, and Ehrling's technical command—including the ability to get a really powerful tone from chorus and band—is not matched by the necessary elasticity of tempo. Some of the secondary casting was below even a provincial level of acceptability.

Why *Meistersinger* had to be trimmed when Strauss's *Der Rosenkavalier* was running into expensive overtime at every performance remains a mystery to me, but it certainly was good to hear the latter score in such a full version as James Levine offered. Moreover, the orchestra was working at top form, all that overripe detail set forth with loving care. *Rosenkavalier* isn't too long, it's simply too much; you can't point to any passage and say, "That is superfluous"; at nearly every moment, something is superfluous, as the orchestra gabbles on and on. It needs to be reduced, like chicken stock, not trimmed like trousers.

Still, with the sympathetic if not very specific Marschallin of Teresa Zylis-Gara, the well-nigh perfect Sophie of Judith Blegen, the fluent and handsome Octavian of Tatiana Troyanos, and the experienced Ochs of Otto Edelmann, the whole confection has rarely been so palatable, Levine measuring out the sentiment as well as the brio with an exceptionally sure hand. He did less well with *Ariadne auf Naxos*; at the performance I heard, Marcia Baldwin was an undistinguished Composer and Monserrat Caballé (Ariadne) seemed, at the least, uninterested in what she was doing. The best thing in the musically wispy Prologue was Nico Castel's unforgettably snotty bearing and accent as the Major-Domo. The opera-within-the-opera just rambled on, the conductor evidently preoccupied with riding herd on the prima donna. Ruth Welting sang Zerbinetta with much charm, if limited tone.

The two new productions of the Met season's second half offered contrasting virtues: Bellini's *I Puritani*, stunning to look at in Ming Cho Lee's old-mastery panoramas; Verdi's *Aida* offering one of the house's strongest casts matched with fine choral and orchestral work. I cannot join the general admiration for the musical performance of *Puritani*, for the virtues of the fine voices were continually nullified by Richard Bonynge's conducting, which managed, remarkably, to be at once noisy and inert. However, I do share the common limited enthusiasm for *Aida*'s staging by John Dexter: the prevalent gloom, the archaeological posturing, are totally at odds with the straightforwardly expressive and triumphantly spectacular music. Marilyn Horne (and, at a later performance, Mignon Dunn) as Amneris, seemed particularly hampered by the gestural restriction—although Leontyne Price and Ljiljana Molnar-Talajic, the two Aidas I heard, paid little enough heed to the protocol enforced on the Egyptian court.

Levine was in his element here, securing ravishing, committed sounds from the orchestra; the oboe solos in *O patria mia* have never been so beautifully played in my hearing, and the treacherous high string writing of the final pages was breathtakingly accurate. Miss Price took a while to warm up, but in the Nile Scene came close to her best form of the past, matching Cornell MacNeil (a superb Amonasro) and then James McCracken (Radames) with impressive intensity. At the later performance, Miss Molnar-Talajic showed the vocal potential, if not yet the steadiness, to be a notable Aida, and Louis Quilico made a strong Amonasro. The Met's current resources in the lowest range were well represented by Bonaldo Giaiotti (Ramfis) and James Morris (The King), but the weakness in small parts that is apparently now unavoidable cropped up in the offstage Priestess, consistently and depressingly flat. This *Aida* came close to matching what the Met used to do very well, while surpassing it in musical shape and direction—a tolerably good omen for the future. □

FILMS

ROBERT HATCH

Alfred Hitchcock has been known in the past (particularly in *Psycho*) to horrify us for insufficient reasons, exploiting for entertainment aspects of human derangement that are hardly entertaining. But his latest film, bearing the excellent punning title of *Family Plot*, is pure and, for all its interlacing threads, simple fun. Only one person dies and he was so completely without redeeming qualities that his widow's distress quite surprised me. There is some wickedness, but it is tripped by the heels; and there is some rascality, which carries off the prize. In the end all the pieces fit, and justice has been meticulously done to everyone. Exemplary.

The plot—screenplay by Ernest Lehman,

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from a novel, *The Rainbird Pattern*, by Victor Channing—concerns two couples whose paths intersect at cross-purposes. As in many well-motivated fairy stories, one couple is "good," and the other is "bad." The good couple consists of a pretty young medium (Barbara Harris) and her gawky unemployed actor boy friend (Bruce Dern). These two, Blanche and Lumley, are first discovered while busily engaged in extracting $10,000 from a foolish old maiden lady named Rainbird (Cathleen Nesbitt). Oddly enough, though they intend to gain this sum on the entirely false premise that Blanche is psychic, they are in fact working like beavers to earn the money by discovering through non-occult means what Miss Rainbird dearly wants to know before she meets her sister in the afterworld. So they are honest fakes.

The bad pair are Adamson (William Devane), an astonishingly elegant West Coast jeweler, and his stylish mistress-accomplice (Karen Black). Their business is kidnapping high establishment personages, a trade they practice with daring, neatness and, from the viewer's standpoint, most satisfactory use of impenetrable disguises and a deceptive brick wall. What makes them bad, rather than merely criminal, is that Adamson is quite insane, being infatuated with danger, a form of exhilaration he finds supremely in murder. Luckily, his killings lack the gear-purring effectiveness of his abductions and the picture is not burdened with corpses.

I give these biographical details to suggest the flavor of a story which the rules of the game forbid me to discuss. In any case, it hardly merits discussion, since it is a contrivance intended to amuse idle minds and would not bear analysis. It does efficiently and with good humor exactly what it is intended to do: create suspense by means which, though hardly plausible, are utterly logical and at least possible. The police give Adamson an exceedingly long run—he is fairly drenched in the odor of turpitude—but official obtuseness is a prerequisite for most crime adventures. Blanche and Lumley exhibit the charm of ineptitude, a cliché of comedy that mildly annoys me because I so seldom encounter it in real life. However, Harris and Dern are young, agile and fresh-faced, and all four principals play the preposterous game in dead earnest. *Family Plot* is not a Hitchcock masterpiece; it is more a bit of skillful foolishness for television, where it will probably appear in a year or so. I was amused to notice that the director, always a contemporary man, has taken advantage of these permissive times to have his couples talk "sexy," in the anticipatory way that affectionate couples do. These exchanges are, I presume, what earned the picture its "PG" rating. They can easily be bleeped out of the evening tube presentation. □

THEATRE / Harold Clurman

Revivals of old plays march on. The two latest are Robert Lowell's three one-act pieces collectively titled *The Old Glory*, first produced by the American Place Theatre in 1964 and now again at its 46th Street house, and Ruth and Augustus Goetz's *The Heiress*, based on Henry James's *Washington Square*, originally staged in 1947 (Broadhurst Theatre).

The Heiress may be the better show, but for special reasons *The Old Glory* is of greater interest to me: it is an interest in Lowell's state of mind and spirit. What fascinates and disturbs in *The Old Glory* is his darkly skeptical view of the American past. The very title smacks of irony: the "glory" is tarnished. Lowell is not bent on anything so facile as a debunking job. He appears troubled by the ambiguities of our historical tradition. A tender-hearted, thin-skinned poet, the harshness of the Puritan strain still dominant in our mores provokes anguish within him. He perceives something inhumane about it. It freezes and represses the playfulness and grace of sensual pleasure which attach us to the world and make existence desirable and precious. Yet he is insecure even in this conviction, for he is himself a descendant of eminently Puritan stock. The inner struggle foments melancholia. The deepest note struck in *The Old Glory* is one of uncertainty. Lack of definition beclouds the triptych. It diffuses its dramaturgy, rendering it prolix and soft.

This is especially true of the opening piece *Endicott and the Red Cross* which, like the following one, *My Kinsman, Major Molineux*, is a transformation of a Hawthorne short story. *Endicott* pictures the conflict in early American settlements between the Puritans and the adherents of the Anglican church. The latter believe in "fun," the Puritans in law. The Puritans, all discipline and ascetic industriousness and thus fighters, must triumph. They are surely justified in opposing the hegemony of the colonial strictures of the English Government under Charles I and Archbishop Laud. But Lowell makes his Puritan Governor Endicott, though a man of power, skeptical of the virtue of his and his constituency's rigor. By force of arms and historical necessity he smashes the Marymount (Anglican) enclave, along with its charmingly "lax" Maypole rituals. The conclusion reveals the pang in the author's heart and leaves the audience with the disquieting question: are the righteous right?

At this point, I feel impelled to add a wholly personal note. When reviewing the play here (November 23, 1964) I suggested a weakness of "muscle" in the writing which reflected a fissure or an insecurity in the writer's soul. His response to my review was simply, "I believe in Adlai Stevenson!" What this implied was that I was probably inclined to a stringency which might in a pinch tend to some sort of social absolutism. But all I meant was that, in the theatre as in politics, greater assertiveness draws firmer lines and adds to clarity of statement.

Benito Cereno is the most effective of *The Old Glory* trio. It testifies to the growing trouble—with its trace of pessimism—in Lowell's conscience. As a theatre piece, though it wanders a bit and talks too much, it profits by an air of melodramatic mystery and a mounting tension. Based on a Melville short story, it alters its meaning. I can best elucidate this point by quoting what I said about this play in my preface to a collection of *Famous American Plays of the 1960s*:

> Melville's tale, which takes place in 1880, communicates the American inability to comprehend evil. Captain Amasa Delano is an innocent: he cannot imagine why there should be any cause for rebellion aboard the Spanish ship which he generously attempts to aid.
>
> Lowell's captain is a severe libertarian. . . . But in the face of a threat to his dominance he does not hesitate to kill. When Babu, the black leader, asserts that the future belongs to those who like himself will rise against black oppression, the captain unhesitatingly empties six barrels of his pistol into Babu's body with the words "This is your future." What Lowell suggests with pained but dignified impassivity is that black insurrection, when it seriously threatens the ruling power, will meet with murder. . . ."If you look into our hearts," Delano asserts, "we all want slaves." The American is a puritan. . .all faith and

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fire, a conclusion which explains the gloominess of Delano's "God save America from the Americans."

The present production of *Benito Cereno* and the accompanying plays is not as well cast or directed as was the former one, which was staged by Jonathan Miller. Only Roscoe Lee Browne, the original Babu, maintains the earlier standard. Alan Mixon does well as the victimized Spanish captain, Don Benito Cereno, but he was unable to erase from my memory the matchless performance of Frank Langella. In any case, no matter what one thinks of or how one interprets the "ideology" of *Benito Cereno*, I believe it to be a signal American play.

For all his understanding and love of the theatre, Henry James was never able to write a viable play. His talent was incompatible with the overt thrust of dramatic art. In *The Heiress*, Ruth and Augustus Goetz, with secure craft, turned James's novella into a neatly effective play of sustained grip.

The play pivots on two intertwined themes. There is first the father and daughter relationship: Dr. Sloper, a wealthy gentleman of New York in 1850, treats his daughter Catherine with a cutting courtesy that has rendered her immoderately shy and awkward. The wife he adored died at Catherine's birth, and she, whom he hoped would be as beautiful, elegant and clever as his wife, is in all these respects a disappointment to him. The second strand in the play's texture is woven out of the courtship of Catherine by Morris Townsend, an apparent ne'er-do-well fortune hunter of luxurious aesthetic disposition who professes to be in love with her and proposes marriage. The themes combine in Catherine's rebellion against her father's coldness toward her, which brings about a reversal and hardening in her nature. Her womanly pride is wounded when her father's suspicion is confirmed that Townsend's proposal was prompted less by affection than by an eagerness to share in her large inheritance. She rejects him even when he seems most sincere. The double frustration of her need to love and to be loved changes her into the kind of woman who for the rest of her life will remain in solitary grandeur, intractable to any further emotional appeal.

The psychological base here is intelligently articulated in unequivocally straightforward lines and, being sound in assumptions and development, lends the play an assured stage worthiness. What is more, it offers splendid opportunities for its actors. The entire cast at the Broadhurst, directed with nice prudence by George Keathley, is admirable. Especially fine are Jane Alexander as Catherine and Richard Kiley as Dr. Sloper. Ms. Alexander is one of our best young actresses, with a marked gift for characterization, remarkably displayed on previous occasions in *The Great White Hope* and in John Hopkins's *Find Your Way Home*. And Richard Kiley's proficiency increases with the years. Neither of these actors rises to any great heights or plumbs special depths on this occasion but they are both constantly arresting and pleasurably convey what their assignments require. I was also taken with the clear honesty of sentiment in Toni Darnay's acting of a minor role.

David Rabe's plays are usually what some people deem "unpleasant." They are angry, brutal, obscene, with flecks of compassionate feeling that others may call sentimental, though they are not without streaks of fierce humor. It may also be claimed that they are wanting in the alleviation of "catharsis."

But all of them have impressed me as strong and, despite reservations, moving; their feeling is almost always inescapably authentic. Rabe seems to have been subjected to the "basic training" of his *Pavlo Hummel*, a play which showed that war bleeds and besmirches all sides and very often destroys the moral fiber in regard to one another or even those on the same side. *Sticks and Bones* was not just the woeful spectacle of a blinded war veteran but rather more about the calloused sensibility of the homes from which the veteran emerges and to which he returns—perhaps the ground for the very outbreak and social tolerance of wars. *Boom Boom Room* pictured ordinary people of lowly estate sunk in the sewers of our civilization, from which a few still attempt agonizingly to climb out.

It would not be very helpful at this juncture to set down the details of events in Rabe's latest play *Streamers*, initially produced at New Haven's Long Wharf Theatre and now playing under the auspices of the New York Shakespeare Festival at the Mitzi E. Newhouse Theatre of Lincoln Center. It takes place in a bare barracks room in Virginia, 1965. But it is not about the war or about the army. One of the room's occupants is a homosexual soldier but the play is not about his "problem," any more than it is about the "black problem" because two black soldiers are involved in the ensuing violence. The combined history of these men and a third—who is just a blandly decent fellow from Wisconsin—along with the sodden sergeants of long professional (military) experience, is not only bloody but a study of long-standing benightedness and misery.

A "universal" inference is evoked: humanity is composed of poor forked animals caught in a trap of which they can never understand the exact identity or the way out. As one of the black men—the most level-headed and innocent of the lot—says of his duties for which he has no more liking than have any of the others: "We're here, aren't we?," and carries on in resigned bewilderment. Rabe sees the bitter joke of this situation but evinces no scorn for any of his characters' ugliest or most shameful actions. There is a certain stoic objectivity (not without its heartbreak) in the depiction, free of any conscious will to shock or gratification in shocking. He simply echoes the pathos of "We're here, aren't we?" One of the play's ironies is that every character is dismayed or "turned off" by the mote in his neighbor's eye but does not consider the beam in his own. Each man has every reason to be considerate of the others, and each hurts the others terribly.

For all the cruel coarseness which agitates *Streamers*, it is a sober play which speaks, after all, in a "small" voice.

Very well acted by the entire cast—most notably by Dorian Harewood, Terry Alexander, Peter Evans and Paul Rudd—and directed with understanding and keen theatrical aptitude by Mike Nichols, it is of greater moment than any other new American play presented this season. □

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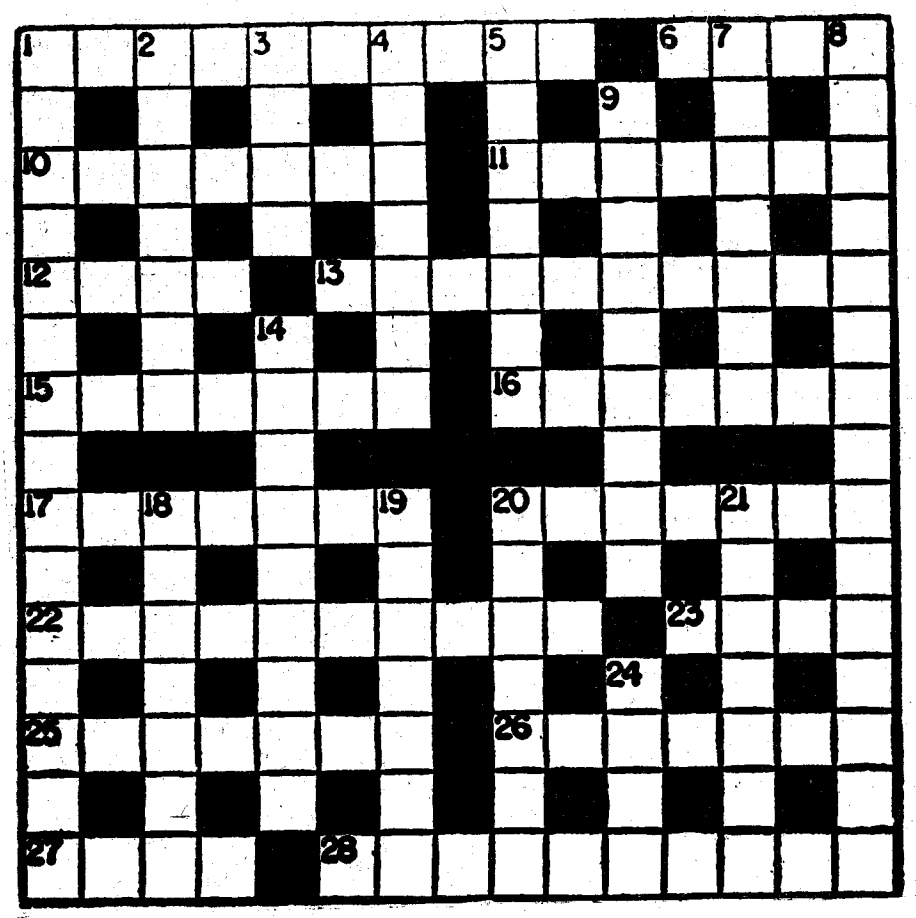
FRANK W. LEWIS



ACROSS

1 and 6 The best food possible, or what you might pay to get it. (5-5,4)
10 Is no ore washed out by it, naturally? (7)
11 Freshens up the joint? (A typical one could have had gas in it, at one time.) (7)
12 Chief on the other side of 3. (4)
13 Life now far removed from what it might take to prepare breakfast. (6,4)
15 Can, in return, estimate the worth of salt. (7)
16 The title of a Mutt and Jeff ending. (7)
17 It's returning in part of the pack the same way, acting strongly. (7)
20 Rank, perhaps. (7)
22 Am slapped a bit around the throat, and shaken up. (5,5)
23 Mail sorted for city delivery. (4)
25 In a very short time, it might be this month. (7)
26 However, Montana is another place at heart! (7)
27 Their twilight was noted some time ago. (4)
28 A thing one might go through after winning sits awkwardly with government opponents. (10)

DOWN

1 Not a slave worker pulling for it, as a possible quick impression. (8,7)
2 A bit of South American diplomacy resorted to in certain assemblies? (4,3)
3 One alternative to a flipper, possibly. (4)
4 With such a pedigree, a calculated verbal approach might take time. (7)
5 A little creature and its devoted followers bring it up a bit, possibly. (7)
7 Underground stream, with a bird following the current. (7)
8 Specifically, such as those for caviar? (9,6)
9 Free of fermentation? The advertising gimmick started out with it. (4,5)
14 Sectarian sort of approach to mathematics or philosophy. (9)
18 Take little notice about the billiard stroke—that's how some fortunes are made. (7)
19 Make leather headgear? Quite the opposite, but it takes its turn aboard ship. (7)
20 Discussion with a friend, as one might assert. (7)
21 Would they put out a storied version? (7)
24 Underfoot in 28. (4)

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE NO. 1630

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